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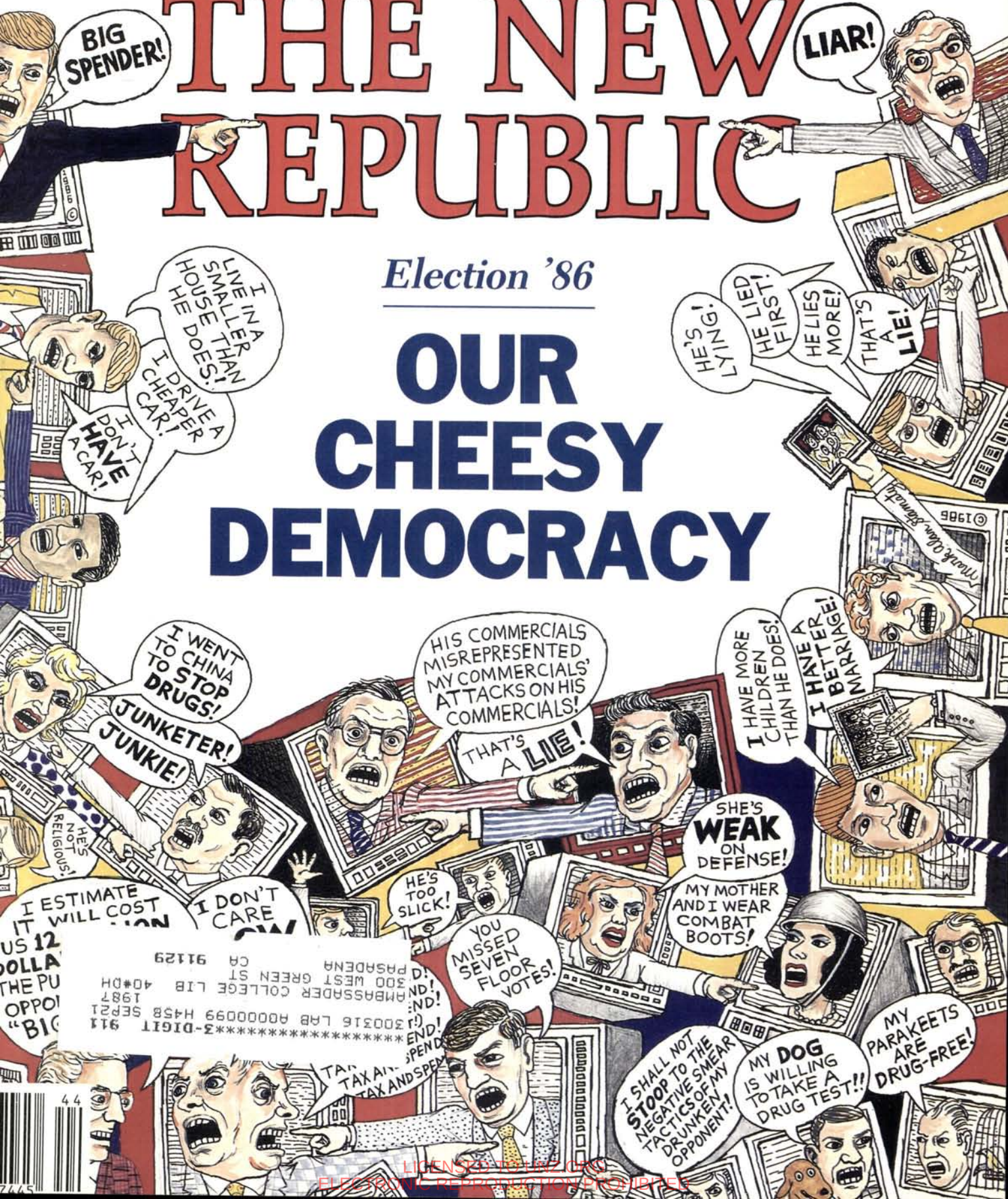
MEESE'S LATEST PRANK

The Editors: Reagan's Ice Capade

OCTAVIO PAZ: MEMORIES OF BORGES • ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON LAURENCE OLIVIER

THE NEW REPUBLIC


BIG SPENDER!
LIAR!
I LIVE IN A SMALLER HOUSE THAN HE DOES!
I DRIVE A CHEAPER CAR!
I DON'T HAVE A CAR!
HE'S LYING!
HE LIED FIRST!
HE LIES MORE!
THAT'S A LIE!
Election '86
OUR CHEESY DEMOCRACY
I WENT TO CHINA TO STOP DRUGS!
JUNKETER!
JUNKIE!
HE'S NOT RELIGIOUS!
HIS COMMERCIALS MISREPRESENTED MY COMMERCIALS' ATTACKS ON HIS COMMERCIALS!
THAT'S A LIE!
I HAVE MORE CHILDREN THAN HE DOES!
I HAVE A BETTER MARRIAGE!
SHE'S WEAK ON DEFENSE!
MY MOTHER AND I WEAR COMBAT BOOTS!
HE'S TOO SLICK!
YOU MISSED SEVEN FLOOR VOTES!
I ESTIMATE IT WILL COST
I DON'T CARE
TAX AND SPEND!
I SHALL NOT STOOP TO THE NEGATIVE SMEAR TACTICS OF MY DRUNKEN OPPONENT!
MY DOG IS WILLING TO TAKE A DRUG TEST!!
MY PARAKEETS ARE DRUG-FREE!
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CORRESPONDENCE

MEREDITH'S MERITS

To the editors:

Joe Queenan lambasts Scott Meredith ("Great Scott!" September 15 & 22) for charging reading fees, scouring mailroom personnel of publishing companies for writers' names, and paying them ten cents a listing. Well, here's one writer who's thrilled at Meredith's zeal and ingenuity. I began my writing career with a non-fee-charging agent, who submitted my first novel ten times without a taker and then returned it to me saying, "When ten people tell you you're drunk, you're drunk."

Lo and behold, a Scott Meredith brochure arrived in the mail. Now, I had never heard of Scott Meredith or the ethics of fee charging or not fee charging, nor did I care. Afraid I'd have a difficult time convincing any agent to take on a book that had ten passes, I sent the manuscript to Meredith with the then required $100 reading fee (1976). Two weeks later they wrote that they would take the book on, and a week later the agency sold my first novel to E. P. Dutton.

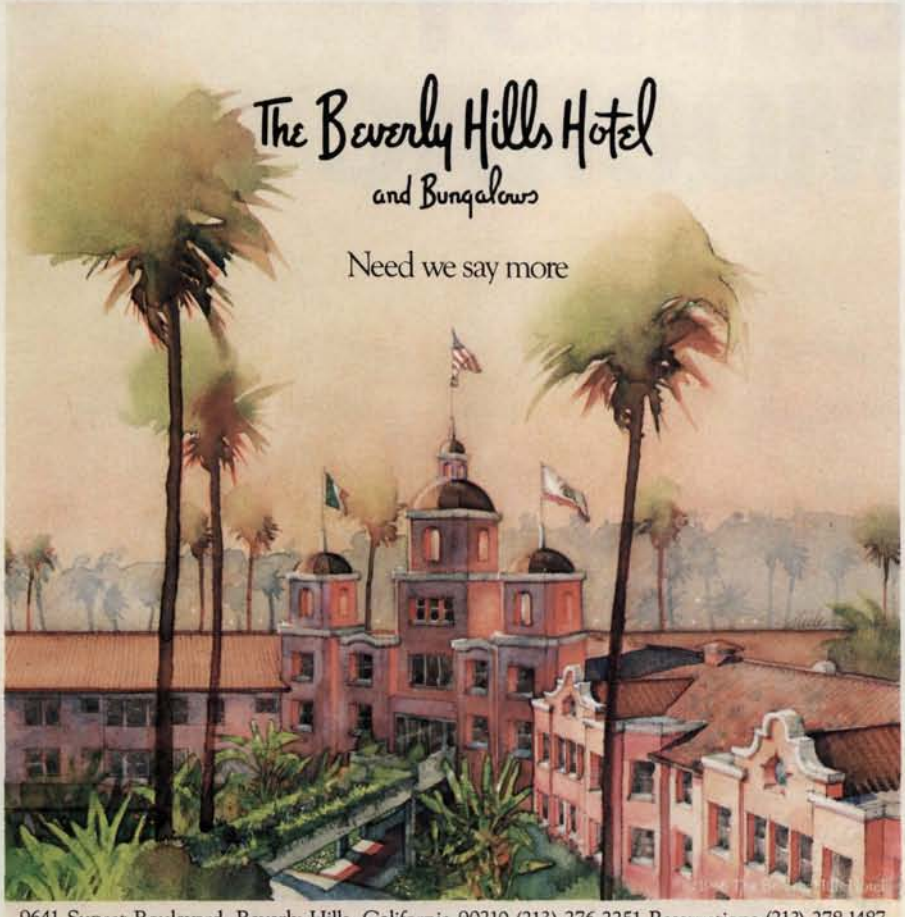
I have not been represented by the Meredith Agency for a number of years now, and I am pleased to be gone from there. In many ways it was an impossible place. Clients' letters and phone calls routinely go unanswered; authors are charged for every petty expense. Yet I must say they went to sell everything I wrote with a vengeance. And as for that mailroom clerk, who sold my name to Scott Meredith off some rejection list—thank god for him.

HOWARD KAPLAN
Los Angeles, California

To the editors:

My first job out of college was at the Scott Meredith Agency, where I worked eight months before the Army rescued me. Aside from a huge increase in Meredith's reading fees, it doesn't sound as if much has changed in 25 years.

BENJAMIN HAIMOWITZ
New York, New York



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ARCHIVES NON-POLITICS

To the editors:

TNR's item about John Agresto's nomination as national archivist ("Notebook," October 6) missed the basic point, which is that the entire purpose of the legislation turning the National Archives into an independent agency was to remove it entirely from the realm of politics and assure that its administration was professional. Mr. Agresto, it is true, has academic training, but basically is a political theorist, a species that has little serious interest in the use of archives as we ordinarily think of them. Moreover, were it not for his association with William Bennett, which is essentially a political and personal one, he would never have been a serious candidate. Indeed, it is inconceivable that his name would even appear on any long (much less short) list of professionally qualified archivists.

JACK N. RAKOVE
Associate Professor of History
Stanford University
Stanford, California

MUSCLE DEFINITION

To the editors:

Andrew Sullivan's "Muscleheads" (September 15 & 22) is one of the most prejudiced, uninformed articles I've ever read. Since when is "triceps" an example of pseudo-scientific jargon? It's an anatomical term that designates a specific three-headed muscle in the upper arm. "Abs" and "pecs" are simple shortened forms of similar terms. Precision in language is not reprehensible.

Sullivan is about three decades behind the times when he states that consuming ten to 30 times the normal man's protein requirements is typical of bodybuilders. Schwarzenegger recommends about one gram of protein a day per two pounds of body weight, about ten percent more than the U.S. Department of Agriculture suggests for the average person. The average bodybuilder is a lot more sophisticated about diet than Sullivan gives him credit for being. You'll rarely find any successful bodybuilder recommending a

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

GIVE UP THE CHIP

> SDI is what brought the Soviets back to arms control talks at Geneva and Iceland. SDI is the key to a world without nuclear weapons.
>
> —President Reagan, October 13

OK, so maybe it would have been nuts to sign on the dotted line. You don't remake the world over the weekend, especially when you thought you were only getting together for a chat. But what happened at Reykjavik was not what administration spin controllers were desperately insisting in the days after the summit: just another step in the long arms control process, and a positive step at that. We are at a genuine impasse—an insurmountable one if President Reagan means what he says about strategic defense.

Reagan and team looked pretty glum on Summit Sunday. But upon reflection they have concluded that Iceland was, in President Reagan's words, "a major advance." National security adviser John Poindexter explains that it was only on the plane home that "it became obvious we had accomplished one helluva lot."

The spin controllers face a delicate dilemma. They don't want to admit that Reagan was snookered into a situation where he either had to make unwarranted concessions on short notice or seem like the spoiler. On the other hand, they don't want to concede that Gorbachev had made sincere and important concessions, and a historic opportunity was missed. The truth, I suppose, is that Reagan was almost snookered into seizing a historic opportunity, but managed to escape it.

Reagan and his supporters brag that Star Wars is what brought the Soviets back to the table. This is supposed to be a telling rebuke to those who oppose the program. But if it's true, a logical corollary is that there can be no deal without Star Wars. A restaurant that entices customers with a sign promising "Fresh Crabs" had better have crabs on the menu. It's nonsense to say, as Reagan does, that SDI enticed the Russians to negotiate and this proves it's too important to give up. It's nonsense, that is, if you really want a deal.

A bargaining chip is ultimately worthless if you're not willing to bargain it away. Reagan, of course, insists that Star Wars is not a bargaining chip. "I [have] pledged to the American people," he said October 13, "that I would not trade away SDI." His more sophisticated defenders insist that he's lying: more disinformation. I hope so. It's a great advantage in any negotiation to be thought stubborn to the point of insanity. Actually being stubborn to the point of insanity is not necessarily advantageous.

The idea that a successful deal must be good for the other side as well as your own is not the product of woolly left-wing thinking. To the contrary, it is a cornerstone of free market capitalism. So look at what Reagan was offering from Gorbachev's perspective. He's right: "it would have taken a madman" to agree to drastic cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals over ten years if, at the end of that time, the United States would be free and might be ready to deploy a strategic defense.

Administration spokesmen ask, disingenuously, why the Soviets should object to strategic defense if neither side would have nuclear weapons to defend against. The purpose of SDI, they say, would be to protect against cheating and third parties. Reagan's proposal, though, was not for total nuclear disarmament. All strategic arsenals would be cut in half over five years, but Reagan's "dream" (self-described) of no weapons at all after another five years applied to ballistic missiles only. Cruise missiles and nuclear-armed bombers would remain.

Furthermore, the very notion that the United States would give up all its ballistic missiles—leaving Europe exposed to superior Soviet conventional strength, leaving America itself exposed to nuclear missiles from China (and France!?!)—quickly caused apoplexy in officers' clubs around the globe. Secretary of State Shultz now says the idea would be to persuade the other nuclear countries to go along. Good luck. Gorbachev might well be skeptical that Reagan's second five-year plan would ever take place.

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Surprising news about after-school jobs

"The authors demonstrate convincingly that much current teenage employment may actually interfere with educational, psychological, and even vocational development....**A remarkable achievement!"**
—JOHN J. CONGER, former President, American Psychological Association

"A provocative study that forcefully challenges some of our time-honored assumptions."
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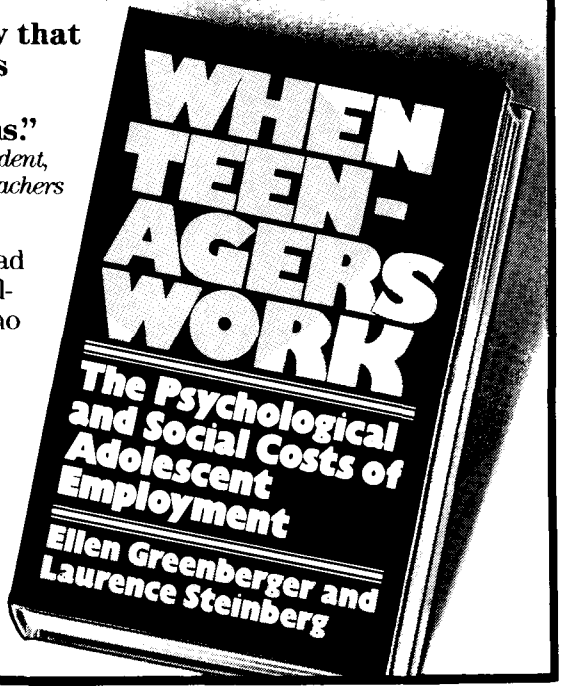
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THE NEW REPUBLIC
NOVEMBER 3, 1986

OUR CHEESY DEMOCRACY

Even measured by the minimal standards of video-age politics, this year's election campaign has been a shallow affair. In state after state, candidates for 435 seats in the House of Representatives, 34 seats in the Senate, and 36 governorships are spending millions of dollars on meaningless TV spots, many of them ripostes to opponents' commercials—or ripostes to ripostes. Substantive discussion about serious issues of any kind is out, while demanding that your opponent take a drug test is practically mandatory. So is attacking your opponent for not showing up for every single vote in Congress or for spying on your campaign. (For details on the cheesiest campaigns, see "Stupid Politician Tricks" by Fred Barnes, page 18.) Our system of electoral politics seems to have lost whatever capacity it once had to engage citizens in a serious debate about the country's future.

Why don't the politicians want to talk issues? On the Republican side, the problem is that Ronald Reagan has now been president for almost six years. The Republicans were bound to lose ground this year for that reason alone. Throughout American electoral history, the incumbent president's party has fared poorly in his second midterm election. But more important, the anti-Washington theme that Reagan and New Right Senate candidates rode to victory in 1980, and used again even in 1984, has now run its course. The party has nothing to say—no plan for keeping the recovery going, no more programs to cut. So the Republicans, clinging desperately to their majority in the Senate, have fallen back on a traditional ally—big money—and the media time that big money buys. They're airing negative messages because they have nothing positive to say about themselves. In one notably preposterous example, Republican Senator Jim Abdnor, running for reelection in South Dakota, attacked the Democratic candidate, Representative Tom Daschle, for associating with Jane Fonda—on the grounds that Fonda advocates eating less red meat, one of South Dakota's biggest farm products. Elsewhere, Republican incumbents are even harping on a shopworn Democratic theme: no cuts in Social Security.

And the Democrats? Lately they've mounted something of a coordinated attack based on economic themes. Many of their candidates in the heartland are making jobs an issue. The party claims this appeal will recapture the anti-establishment "populism" theme that the Republicans appropriated from them in 1980 and 1984. Sounds promising. But there's less here than meets the eye. If it has any content at all beyond an empty message of "blame the incumbent," the Democrats' "populism" is a code word for bigger farm subsidies and protectionism.

Cowed by Reagan's personal popularity, the Democrats had originally set out to duck national themes altogether, and to focus instead on local issues and the personal qualities of the party's individual candidates. That strategy is still in evidence. When they do address economic issues, Democrats talk about them in parochial terms, saying they'll "stand up" for their states' interests. Then they go on to tackle the Republicans on matters of strictly local interest: keeping nuclear waste dumps back East (as candidates in Washington and Nevada are promising), propping up peanut prices (Georgia), increasing the Coast Guard's budget (Florida). In Alaska, Democrat Glenn Olds is attacking Republican Frank Murkowski because the Arctic Research Commission Murkowski claims credit for is actually located in Los Angeles. Instead of filling the void left by the Republicans' themelessness with their own vision of a better America, Democrats are too often trying to score points off local and sectional selfishness.

But this year's vapid politics reflect deeper problems in the country's system of conducting political business. The 1986 election is yet another chapter in the long decline of the two political parties. Every year they grow less capable of articulating and defending political ideas, or even of

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mobilizing masses of people to get out and vote. Such tasks are increasingly left up to the individual candidates, many of whom this year are downplaying party affiliation and selling "independence" instead.

Election campaigns have always been riddled with demagogy and worse. But at least in the old days there was an element of direct human contact between office-seekers and voters. There were ward heelers, union bosses, and other party hacks to assume personal responsibility for getting to know the voters and communicating their concerns to the candidates. Now candidates hardly even bother to shake hands with factory workers at quitting time. They make contact through the impersonal medium of television. The ward heeler has been replaced by political consultants whose polls are designed to find out exactly what the voters want to hear at any given moment, and media consultants whose TV ads reshape candidates' images to suit ephemeral public tastes. (See "Postmodern Hustle" by Jeffrey L. Pasley, page 21.) Mass-marketeers are taking over our democracy.

This year's campaign ads on TV provide depressing testimony about what happens when these practitioners acquire a grip on candidates for high office. The proliferation of negative ads is simply a result of the consultants' discov-

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on Chart

1. MAY THE FAULT BE WITH YOU — 3 — 3

Summit cum Star Wars. Whose fault was the summit's "collapse"? If politics are a perception game, then the hurry-up summit was the biggest mess since the instant replay ref. Reagan never shaped public expectations, allowed the Soviets to fill the vacuum with their Historic Opportunity angle, then had to fight off perceptions of Historic Failure by invoking the yet uninvented Star Wars as liberty's guarantor. Still, the Democrats' unwillingness to politicize the political is a tribute to Reagan's popularity.

2. CARGO QUILT — — 1

Nicaragua. The crash in Nicaragua of a cargo plane with U.S. citizens aboard, despite the great attention being paid to it by the press, is a sign of how much anti-Communist elbow room there is in the country. This has yet to cause significant ripples on the Hill, for example. Events in Nicaragua fail to spark much lasting interest in the mainstream, perhaps because, as recent polls have indicated, half the country doesn't even know which side the U.S. is on there.

3. COMING INTO THE COUNTRY — — 1

Columbus. The *National Geographic*'s news on Columbus's true landfall is an early starting gun for the Columbus Extravaganza; his 500th arrives in 1992. A previously unknown controversy over Columbus's multiple graves has already turned up. Given the nation's self-love, and the tourism bucks at stake, prepare for six years of angles: Columbus was a Marrano, Brendan the Monk (and everybody else) was here first, a pro-Amerind backlash, etc.

4. FOR WHOM NOBEL TOLLS — — 1

Awards. Nobel Week has long since sunk to the status of an intellectual Olympics, albeit one the U.S., with its contingent of immigrant researchers, frequently wins. Far more attention is paid to the winners' nationalities than to their work. The only thing lacking is national anthems.

5. FREQUENCY MODULATION — — 1

Celebrity. The titillated reaction to the assault on Dan Rather was no less bizarre that the attack itself. "What's the Frequency?" T-shirts are actually available by mail. There is something arousing, it seems, in the humiliation of the wealthy and highly visible media class. Interestingly, the freed Daniloff made a rapid transition to celebrity-target last week, with reporters grimacing at his paean to Reagan, attacking his volubility, and sniffing critically at his book contract.

6. DOWN UNDER OVER — — 1

Australia. The huge success of *Crocodile Dundee* highlights the popularity of things Australian at all levels of U.S. culture. Oz broke through at the upper end with a string of highbrow movies and the America's Cup victory, hit the middle with the *Thorn Birds* best seller and "Cell Block H" TV series, and worked away at the bottom with *Mad Max* and Foster's Beer. Now The Limited has a line of "Outback Red" clothes, U.S. tourism has more than doubled since '82, and even Christina Stead's hot. If only they had their own Royal Family.

7. RETURN TO DISSENTER — 1 — 2

Disinformation. Bernard Kalb's Hamlet-like resignation as State Department spokesman stuck out because the story that brought it about—the anti-Qaddafi disinformation campaign—had already faded. Indeed, it was Kalb's resignation that kept the story alive at all. But the rapid demise of such an obvious anti-establishment angle shows what front-page architects think will sell.

8. WAR OF THE WORDS — — 1

Language. Apparently due to the PBS series on English and its tie-in book, language as a subject of social contention has revived. Attention, both pro and con, is again being paid to so-called Black English, and to English usage as evidence of cultural imperialism, but the big issue is bilingualism. English-only referendums in California have gotten play, and an interesting English v. Spanish debate has developed. Among its new angles: the language "problem" is not a failure of Hispanics to assimilate into the English culture, but a failure of Anglos to learn Spanish.

9. TAKE A HIKE — — 1

Walking. The running culture is slowing down to a walk. Warnings that strenuous exercise—aerobics, sidewalk jogging, etc.—can be bad for some people are filtering down, and "fitness walking"—not Olympic-style walking—is catching on. Just out is the *Walking Magazine*, featuring a buyers' guide to walking shoes, Tips for Better Walking, and "Footloose in Manhattan." What's impressive here is that there's a profit to be sought not only when a subculture takes shape, but as it winds down too.

10. HOTTER COOLERS — — 1

Food. Five years ago, wine coolers were not even a product. Today they comprise a $1 billion industry that is expected to grow over 40 percent in the next year. They are also one of the only products *increasing* their TV ad budgets, with a tough scramble under way for both regional and national markets. There are now dozens of brands, including a Harley-Davidson cooler ("Experience the taste of a legend"). On the way: beer coolers.

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–Mrs. James S. Brady–

"Help me fight the National Rifle Association."

"Five years ago, John Hinckley pulled a $29 revolver from his pocket and opened fire on a Washington street. He shot the President. He also shot my husband.

I'm not asking for your sympathy. I'm asking for your help.

I've learned from my own experience that, alone, there's only so much you can do to stop handgun violence. But that together, we can confront the mightiest gun lobby–the N.R.A.–and win.

I've only to look at my husband Jim to remember that awful day... the unending TV coverage of the handgun firing over and over... the nightmare panic and fear.

It's an absolute miracle nobody was killed. After all, twenty thousand Americans are killed by handguns every year. Thousands more–men, women, even children–are maimed for life.

Like me, I know you support *stronger* handgun control laws. So does the vast majority of Americans. But the National Rifle Association can spend so much in elections that Congress is afraid to pass an effective national handgun law.

It's time to change that. Before it's too late for another family like mine... a family like yours.

I joined Handgun Control, Inc. because they're willing to take on the N.R.A. Right now we're campaigning for a national waiting period and background check on handgun purchases.

If such simple, basic measures had been on the books five years ago, John Hinckley would never have walked out of that Texas pawnshop with the handgun which came within an inch of killing Ronald Reagan. He lied on his purchase application. Given time, the police could have caught the lie and put him in jail.

Of course, John Hinckley's not the only one. Police report that thousands of known criminals buy handguns right over the counter in this country. We have to stop them.

So, please, pick up a pen. Fill out the coupon. Add a check for as much as you can afford, and mail it to me today.

It's time we kept handguns out of the wrong hands. It's time to break the National Rifle Association's grip on Congress and start making our cities and neighborhoods safe again.

Thank you and God bless you."

"Together we can win."

Dear Sarah,

It's time to break the N.R.A.'s grip on Congress once and for all. Here's my contribution to Handgun Control, Inc., the million-strong nonprofit citizens' group you help direct:

☐ $15 ☐ $25 ☐ $35 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 or $_____.

☐ Tell me more about how I can help.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ NR

HANDGUN CONTROL

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ery that attacks make a more lasting impression on voters than positive commercials. More candidates are making the attacks personally, rather than working through stand-ins, because research shows that the ads work better that way. The surge in negative advertising has even given rise to the countertactic known as "inoculation": ads designed to answer potential negative ads even before the attacks air.

One such pre-emptive effort is that of 72-year-old Senator Alan Cranston of California. After 18 years in the Senate, you'd think that Cranston would have earned the right to campaign strictly on his record. But his media consultants seem to have persuaded him that he needs to project the same image of eternal youth that Ronald Reagan does—and to offset the youthful vigor of Cranston's opponent, 46-year-old Representative Ed Zschau. So they've produced a series of ads in which the senator goes to absurd lengths to hide his gaunt frame and bald head: in one commercial shot with workers at a loading dock, he wears a puffed-up down jacket and a hard hat; in another, he sports an oversized baseball cap as he gallops through a park with a group of children. Nobody seems concerned by the indignity of it all. It is apparently taken for granted that to demonstrate his fitness for re-election, the septuagenarian minority whip of the Senate must frolic outdoors with people who aren't even old enough to vote

We don't have anything against negative advertising per se. Cleverly made attacks can often serve to illuminate important differences between candidates, as well as entertain the voters. But the ads we've been treated to in 1986 don't cast any light on anything substantial. They are often flatly dishonest. Often they focus pointlessly on gaffes. A gaffe is something a candidate says that gets him or her in trouble, usually because it's the truth. The attack that follows a gaffe generally forces the gaffer to retract or backpeddle—that is, to lie. In South Dakota, for example, Jim Abdnor said that farmers might have to sell at a lower price for a while, and hence make less money, in order to recapture lost markets. True enough. But Abdnor's opponent, Tom Daschle, has jumped on the comment with a series of ads attacking Abdnor, preposterously, as anti-farmer. Abdnor has responded by accusing Daschle of twisting his words, insisting that he doesn't really believe the perfectly reasonable thing he previously said.

The emphasis on TV makes campaigns more expensive, because TV ads cost a lot of money. Therefore candidates have to devote enormous amounts of time to raising money, especially money from political action committees. They are so busy hustling for dollars that their time for meeting and talking with ordinary citizens is limited. Candidates from both parties often find themselves competing for the favor of the same corporate givers. This tends to blur their differences on the big issues. The danger is not only that candidates will become ideologically conservative but also that they will grow politically cautious, shying away from risks that might offend their contributors, and choosing to campaign on the junk issues that have dominated this year's election.

The complacent interpretation of this year's issueless election is that the country has pulled out of its post-Watergate cynicism. Under the optimistic leadership of Ronald Reagan, it is said, Americans have regained public confidence in their government and themselves. There are no serious issues because people basically like the way things are going. But people are not content. In fact, they are quite uneasy about the apparent downward direction of the national economy, and about what that will mean for their families and communities. The problem is cynicism, not overconfidence: based on the level of debate in this campaign, no intelligent voter would have any reason to feel confident in the political system's ability to produce answers to the country's problems.

RECOVERING FROM REYKJAVIK

The Reykjavik summit was no disaster. In fact, contrary to initial impressions, it was a considerable success. The United States and the Soviet Union came closer than they ever have to a sweeping agreement covering nearly all phases of nuclear weapons, and yet Reagan and Gorbachev did not hastily and euphorically sign a pact to eliminate ballistic missiles that we might all be shaking our heads over this morning. They did go away mad, but within a day both sides were saying that arms talks could go forward from where the summiteers left off. They *should* go forward, and the aim of the American side should be to get something even better than the so-called "deal of the century" that President Reagan turned down.

This better deal would involve reaffirming the 1972 ABM Treaty, extending it for ten years, and making clear that its terms permit not just laboratory research of strategic defense systems, but open-air and space testing as well. The pact should give the Soviets assurance that testing will not involve actual components of a deployable SDI system. If the Soviets are truly interested in reducing the threat of offensive nuclear weaponry, and if President Reagan can bring himself to bargain away *part* of his beloved Star Wars vision, there is not a great distance left to go to another summit.

In general, we agree with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former national security adviser Zbigniew

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Brzezinski that unplanned summits are a bad idea. Nuclear security is too important to be negotiated through surprise proposals and stunning settlements reached by exhilarated principals and exhausted subordinates over a single weekend. Events may yet prove that Reagan should never have gone to Reykjavik. The Soviets could slide backward from positions they took there (as Gorbachev seemed to do at the conclusion of the summit in relinking Euromissile reductions to Star Wars), and they may use the failure to reach agreement as a way to divide the Western alliance and stimulate Reagan's domestic opposition. If they do so, it will indicate that Gorbachev asked for this summit not in order to bargain, but either to kill Star Wars or to make propaganda. If Gorbachev were to succeed in this—if, for example, Congress were to defund Star Wars or leftist disarmers were to win forthcoming elections in Britain and West Germany—then the summit will have proved a debacle.

But the administration should be able to prevent this outcome by making it clear it is willing to continue negotiating. Great progress was made at Reykjavik. The two sides agreed to cut their arsenals down to 1,600 missiles and bombers (from 2,500 permitted under SALT II), and 6,000 warheads (down from 9,000). There was to be a "significant" reduction in Soviet heavy missiles—enough to reduce the vulnerability of U.S. land-based missiles, though still not eliminate it. Europe would have been entirely freed of the threat now posed by 991 intermediate-range Soviet warheads and 252 U.S. warheads, and the threat of Soviet SS-20s in Asia would have been reduced. The Soviets backed off from their demand for a total ban on nuclear testing and agreed to work out verification procedures and then limit tests, as the United States prefers.

This movement was all salutary. But then President Reagan proposed that, instead of merely cutting strategic arsenals in half, both sides give up all their ballistic missiles by the end of ten years. Gorbachev agreed. Had that deal been cut, experts all over the world would be questioning whether it was truly a good idea. It would effectively return the world to the bomber era, eliminating not merely destabilizing land-based missiles, but mobile (and stabilizing) sea-based missiles too. European security would be based much more heavily on conventional weapons, where the Warsaw Pact has an advantage. The allies would fear that they were pawns in a superpower condominium, and between the United States and the Soviet Union, the side with superior air defense—currently, the Soviet Union—would have a strategic advantage. The deal was not cut because of Gorbachev's insistence that the United States confine Star Wars research to the laboratory, which Reagan refused.

SOME OF THE president's critics think this was proof positive of his ideological intransigence and mindless dedication to building a population shield that he fantasizes will make nuclear weapons obsolete. There is much to support Reagan doubters, not the least his oft-repeated declaration that Star Wars is not a bargaining chip, and his statement in Iceland that Gorbachev had insisted "that we sign an agreement that would deny me and future presidents . . . the right to develop, test, *and deploy* a defense against nuclear missiles for the people of the Free World." In his TV address after returning home, Reagan said that "SDI is the key to a world without nuclear weapons."

TO SAY THE least, we do not share the president's enthusiasm for Star Wars. He believes almost religiously that American technology will produce a system that can track large numbers of missiles in flight, discriminate between warheads and decoys, aim and fire lasers or energy beams at the right targets, and also protect itself from attack—all more or less instantaneously and automatically. We are skeptical that such a system could ever work. And if it did, it could make the world vastly more dangerous than it is now under the system of Mutual Assured Destruction. If both sides deployed the wrong mix of offensive and defensive weapons, there might be an incentive in a crisis for one side to launch a first strike lest it be hit first and prevented from retaliating by the other side's defense.

On the other hand, it is possible to conceive of defensive systems that would enhance deterrence by making it less likely that a first strike could succeed. And there is growing scientific testimony that some limited Star Wars systems could work. So we need to research it and think through its implications. The Soviets are doing just that, and both Democratic and Republican defense experts say that the Soviets are not confining their investigations to the laboratory. Their huge laser at Sary Shagan fires into space, for example, and some of their Soyuz space station experiments are thought to have SDI implications.

Whatever we may think about the system's potential, the Soviets seem to believe unreservedly in our ability to produce it. Otherwise they would not be expending such political energy and offering so many inducements to get us to abandon it. SDI is currently the driving force behind arms control, and Reagan would have been foolish to throw it away—or promise to lock it in a laboratory—while negotiations were under way to decide which 50 percent of Soviet strategic weapons would be dismantled, on what schedule, and how we would verify the reductions.

President Reagan need not admit it yet, but Star Wars deployment—rather than testing and research—ought to be a bargaining chip. Former Defense Secretary Harold Brown, a physicist who personally believes that Star Wars won't ever provide an impenetrable peace shield, nevertheless concurs that Reagan should not have signed the deal that Gorbachev demanded. As the president said on television, that deal amounts to "a new version of a 14-year-old ABM treaty that the Soviet Union has already violated." Brown thinks that the administration also was mistaken, however, in seemingly pushing for what's called the "broad" interpretation of the ABM Treaty—that is, the United States would be allowed to do anything short of actually deploying SDI for ten years, and would be ready

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to deploy immediately thereafter. "There's an awful lot of room between Gorbachev's position and Reagan's," said Brown. "I think the administration missed an important opportunity. It could have said, 'Let's pocket what we've agreed to [on offensive reductions], and find a way to close our differences on SDI.' "

We agree. The obvious way to close the gap on Star Wars is to settle on the so-called "narrow" interpretation of ABM: that the two sides can do "diagnostic" research and testing to see if SDI could work, but not build or test deployable components of an SDI system. A former aide of Brown's in the Carter-era Pentagon, Washington lawyer Walter Slocombe, points out that many agreements have been reached in the past limiting the size and power of missiles and radars, and that similar limits could be applied to SDI—for example, by forbidding Star Wars tests against ballistic missiles in flight.

Based on Reagan's record, we fear that he is not inclined to strike any deal that would limit SDI in the way that Brown suggests—even to secure the deep offensive cuts that Gorbachev agreed to in Iceland. To prevent that from happening, liberals in Congress should be ready to step in after the elections and make funding for Star Wars contingent on good-faith bargaining toward missile reductions. We hope that candidates for Congress will make Star Wars an issue and get a mandate to help Reagan secure his place in history as a peacemaker, even if it's in spite of himself. We're not asking the president to buy Gorbachev's deal, but to produce a better one of his own.

NOTEBOOK

□ WORKPLACE DOUBLE STANDARDS: Business interests—egged on by social conservatives (and exploitative politicians of all stripes)—are falling over one another in their eagerness to impose drug tests on their employees. Meanwhile, many of these same business interests and conservatives fought against the employer sanctions in the suddenly-back-from-the-dead immigration reform. "The [immigration] bill seeks to deputize employers to supplement the border guards," argues the *Wall Street Journal*. So what's the difference between asking employers to help enforce the immigration laws and asking them to enforce the drug laws? If anything, it seems to us, the difference cuts the other way. After all, employers directly benefit from, and are even largely responsible for, illegal immigration. They are not responsible for illegal drug use. We at TNR are unhappy about immigration restrictions of any sort—certainly we think that annual quotas could be much higher than they are now. But if people are to be punished for sneaking into this country to work, it seems intolerable to impose no sanction on those who entice them and profit from their labor.

□ FEW OPPONENTS OF EMPLOYER SANCTIONS have the courage to oppose immigration restrictions as well. They just want to make these restrictions impossible to enforce. Employers of illegals, in fact, undoubtedly prefer the current arrangement to genuinely open borders, because it creates a desperate and docile work force. But immigration is not the only area where a large body of hypocrites likes to keep laws on the books, but unenforceable. There is a proposal before Congress to ban fuzzbusters, or radar detectors. The *New York Times* quotes Senator Robert Stafford of Vermont as saying that his office has been flooded with mail from people insisting on their right to thwart police radar, most of whom also insist that they believe in the 55-mile-per-hour speed limit. Meanwhile, though, there is a strong movement in Congress to raise that limit, originally imposed during the energy crisis. Representative James Howard of New Jersey wants to attach an anti-fuzzbuster clause to any bill raising the speed limit. This strikes us as a statesmanlike solution. Like the immigration bill—which grants amnesty to millions of illegals already here—it reduces the need for hypocrisy and the ability to practice it at the same time.

□ SCHLUMBERGER LTD. was celebrated in Ken Auletta's 1984 book, *The Art of Corporate Success*, as the very model of a dynamic world-class corporation. As the largest supplier of oil-field services, Schlumberger—founded in France, headquartered in New York, chartered in the Netherlands Antilles—relies upon a keen diplomatic sense to placate its customers in the Middle East and the Third World. In at least one instance, this diplomacy has included signing up with the Arab boycott of Israel. A "Certificate of Boycott," dated March 18, 1986, signed by a Schlumberger division manager in Panama, and adorned with stamps and signatures of Saudi Arabian and Malaysian officials, testifies that Schlumberger Overseas in Bangladesh and all other affiliates are in compliance with the economic boycott of Israel imposed by the League of Arab States in 1948. Because the certificate was signed by an official of one of Schlumberger's offshore subsidiaries, it probably doesn't violate the American anti-boycott law of 1977. Nevertheless, it's shameful. (As is Schlumberger's use of the same loophole to avoid *joining* the American boycott of Libya, where Schlumberger technology is vital to Colonel Qaddafi's flow of petrodollars.) Schlumberger says the certificate was an isolated incident that "does not reflect company policy." Is it merely a coincidence, then, that this multifaceted multinational does no business in Israel? Possibly not. According to an executive of a competing oil services firm, "They're always trying to pin some Israel connection on us to score points in the Arab world."

□ ISRAEL'S AMERICAN SUPPORTERS take justifiable pride in the fact that Israel is the only nation in the Middle East that shares and upholds Western political values. For that reason, it is sad to see that, at least concerning freedom of the press, Israel's understanding of those values is not the same as our own. On August 22 the Israeli High Court upheld the government's closing of two Arabic-language

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papers published in Jerusalem. The grounds were that *al-Ahd* (a daily) and *al-Mithaq* (a bimonthly) are funded and directed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an especially virulent and violent anti-Israel group. This may be true, although *al-Ahd*'s publisher denies it. Certainly the papers echoed the PFLP line as closely as the censor's knife would allow. But so what? Israel should be swift and forceful in prosecuting groups that engage in terrorist acts in the occupied territories, but this rule does not apply to people who are merely expressing views—even the views of those engaging in terrorism. A freedom to speak only that which is palatable to the state is no freedom at all.

□ GREAT INSTITUTIONS SEEM TO HAVE a life of their own, independent of those who run them. But it doesn't take a professional media watcher to know that A. M. Rosenthal's nine-year tenure at the helm of the *New York Times* enormously strengthened America's finest newspaper. A reporter of legendary repute, Rosenthal made the *Times*'s news section a morning imperative for the policy and opinion elites as well as for the more than ordinarily informed citizen. Alert to changes in the wider culture, Rosenthal added features that some critics charge did not belong in a sober news daily. But we see these innovations—the weekly Science Times, for example—as serving the paper's readers in the way that continuing education might if there were continuing education to speak of in the United States. And we can testify that the energy and space devoted by Rosenthal's *Times* to analysis of the news sometimes made us feel the vocation of the weekly opinion periodical to be in peril. Rosenthal, who has very clear views of his own, encouraged a vigorous heterogeneity in his pages. Editorial page editor Max Frankel, himself a man of real intellectual and moral scruple, should make an ideal successor. We know Arthur Gelb, who will be managing editor, and Jack Rosenthal, Frankel's successor on the editorial page, less well, but their visible attainments are the happiest of augurings. Les Gelb, the *Times*'s national security correspondent in the Washington bureau, is a longtime contributor to TNR. His promotion to deputy editor of the editorial page will bring to West 43rd Street a journalist whose subtle views on the hard issues of our time are rooted in a tough mind and a demanding ethical sensibility. Changes at the *New York Times* are always big news. This impressive succession is a tribute to both publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger and Abe Rosenthal, who are envied by the trade not only for their power but also for their accomplishments.

□ HOUSE DIVIDED:

Mortgage Rates Edge Back Up Above 10% Mark

—*Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 7, 1986

Mortgage Rates Fall Sharply

—*N.Y. Times*, same day

POSTCARD SOUTH AFRICA

BOYCOTT BUSTER

Cape Town

Patrick: The academic boycott and the breaking of it by Conor Cruise O'Brien has become the hottest issue on the campus of the University of Cape Town. The first I heard of any continuing action on the boycott issue was Tuesday, October 7. I was handed a flyer printed and distributed by the militant organization AZAPO. The flyer declared: "O'Brien is a stinking scoundrel and a rogue." The flyer announced a "Day of Action" against O'Brien and a lunchtime meeting to discuss tactics. I missed whatever discussion had taken place but did catch the meeting on the move.

The students emerged from the student union headquarters in procession, dancing and chanting in Xhosa. The group, composed of all races, was led by a group of black students, one of whom led the cheer through a megaphone. The students also held aloft a large cardboard placard reading "Viva UDF" (United Democratic Front). As they descended the steps, they flipped the placard. The other side read "Viva IRA" (Irish Republican Army). Some 30 people marched to the administration building and demanded—unsuccessfully—the cancellation of O'Brien's lectures.

Conor was due to speak to the Jewish student association that evening. I arrived at the designated hour and place to find the lecture theater besieged by about 200 students chanting and dancing. All three exits were guarded by campus police, and admission was strictly restricted. I was almost kept out myself.

The lecture began and ended to the background droning of the demonstrators. Just as Conor had finished speaking, the students broke through the police barricade and forced open one of the theater doors. They decided, after about an hour, that "O'Brien should never again lecture in the University of Cape Town," and that they should broaden their action to include all "boycott-breaking" foreign academics. The following day they began acting on their decisions. Conor's morning class was the next target for disruption.

With Conor safely inside, the campus police barricaded the door of his classroom with two tables and themselves. The students moved slowly down the hall outside the classroom. When they reached the door and were refused entrance, the inevitable scuffles broke out. Before the students succeeded in breaking down the door, the scene turned nasty. Students began kicking and pushing security men, and at least one student took off his belt and swung the buckle end at the police.

Conor: A rough week. Still, there have been some good moments. On Tuesday night, as I finished my lecture to the Jewish students, with a howling mob outside in the corridor busy breaking down the door, members of the audience kept on taking notes of what I was saying about Israel, right up to the moment when the door actually burst open and the mob irrupted. There have always been Jews who

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have not ceased to study, even with the pogrom, or worse, at the door.

On Wednesday morning, when the same mob, now reinforced from outside, came to break up my regular morning undergraduate class, several of my students went and held the door, keeping the mob out. Afterward the two elected representatives of my class—I had about a hundred students in all, of all races—wrote a letter to the dean to protest what had happened. They stated that the class is almost unanimous in support of their protest letter, and of me.

On Friday morning the vice chancellor of the University of Cape Town, Dr. Stewart Saunders, rang me in Johannesburg, where I was, at the time, a guest of the University of the Witwatersrand (and being subjected to the same kind of militant student attention as in Cape Town). Dr. Saunders said he believed that further serious disorders might be imminent on the Cape Town campus. "If I think it necessary," he said, "in order to avert serious violence, will you authorize me to say, on your behalf, that you have cancelled your remaining classes on campus?"

I gave the necessary contingent authorization. What else could I do? What if I refused, and somebody got killed? All the same, I felt pretty sick about it, and so, clearly, did the vice chancellor. After all, he was acknowledging, for the moment, that mob rule has won on his campus, under the flag of "the academic boycott."

In the course of the recent campus shenanigans, a faculty member, talking to a student leader, tried to make the case against the academic boycott. "We are not interested in intellectual argument," replied the "student." "We are only interested in action." The question is whether people who are not interested in intellectual argument should have any place at a university. If my visit has done some good—and I believe it has—it is in focusing attention on that question, as a matter of urgency, and in eliciting what I believe is a growing determination to answer that question with a clear "No," and to put that "No" into effect.

Patrick, along with scores of others, saw that student leader slash at a campus policeman with a belt, in order to gain access to a classroom, for the purpose of breaking up a class. If the university allows the student to get away with that, it will be as good as hoisting a flag with the device "Mob Rule OK." Quite a lot of university people are now determined that that flag shall not fly. At Witwatersrand, one professor said to me: "Your visit and its repercussions have forced us to think about things we didn't want to think about, but need to think about." Things like taking a stand against mob rule.

Virtually everybody at the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand is against apartheid. Almost all faculty members, and probably the great majority of students, want free universities and intellectual freedom in general to be an important part of the heritage of a future free and non-racial South Africa. But the students who are now going on the rampage *don't* want that. They want the universities to be under rigid ideological control, by people like themselves, both now and after apartheid has gone.

The signal that brought the academic boycott to the fore—and gave a license to rampage—was given by the recent Conference of the Non-Aligned States at Harare, Zimbabwe. Now, most of the Non-Aligned don't tolerate dissent in their own countries, and consequently have no time for bourgeois stuff like academic freedom. In the ordering of their own internal affairs the Non-Aligned are very Aligned indeed.

But South Africa is a much more developed country than any of the Non-Aligned, and many South Africans, black as well as white, both hope and believe that free non-racial elections in South Africa will *not* lead to the autocratic rule of one party, or one person. And there are plenty of people in the townships who don't want the rule of the comrades—women, for example, who have seen family planning clinics broken up to the slogan of "A baby for Azania!" (the name given to revolutionary South Africa).

The attempt to snuff out freedom of speech at the universities can thus be seen as a sort of trial run for what some on the left want to urge upon the society as a whole. Insofar as the universities make an effective stand against these pressures, they will be rendering a service also to the future of the wider society. But the primary reason they must resist, and deploy all their resources and sanctions to that end, is that their very raison d'être is at stake.

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN AND PATRICK O'BRIEN

Conor Cruise O'Brien, the author of many books, most recently of *The Siege: An Outsider Looks at Zionism* (Simon and Schuster), was vice chancellor of the University of Ghana from 1962 to 1965. Patrick O'Brien is a free-lance writer.
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Meese pickpockets Congress.

THE LAST WORD

AN ADMINISTRATION supposedly dedicated to strict construction of the Constitution has come up with yet another constitutional innovation in an effort to increase presidential power. The innovation, the brainchild of Ed Meese's Justice Department, is a new wrinkle on an old institution: the presidential signing statement, the once purely ceremonial remarks made by a president when he signs a bill into law. The administration has begun using these statements to lay down its own understanding of ambiguous or controversial laws, distributing the statements widely for the first time, and urging judges to rely on them when the laws are interpreted in court.

An example of how the new technique works involves a key provision of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1986. The controversy was whether the law should *order* the Environ-

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mental Protection Agency to compel all local governments to maintain safe water, as Congress wanted, or merely *allow* the EPA to take this action, as the administration preferred. Horses were traded, deals were struck—and the White House lost. The bill—passed unanimously in the Senate and 382-21 in the House, and signed reluctantly by President Reagan on June 19—states unequivocally that the EPA "shall" (not "may") issue the safe-water orders.

But having lost the battle, the administration is not giving up on the war. When Reagan signed the safe-water law, his statement declared that his interpretation of the bill was that it did *not* require the EPA to take any enforcement action.

The signing statement offensive, Meese said in a recent speech, is designed to "improve" statutory interpretation by making clear the president's "intent" in signing the laws. The move does have a surface appeal. For starters, the First Amendment (as well as common sense) allows the president to say anything he wants. Furthermore, since courts have long relied on "legislative intent" in interpreting laws, why shouldn't they look at "executive intent" as well? The key issue, then, is whether the courts should give the signing statements any weight when interpreting the considerable ambiguities present in most laws. They shouldn't.

The Constitution grants "all legislative powers" to Congress, and the Supreme Court has long recognized that the congressional process of writing a law can crucially affect its meaning. Since laws are often stated in very general terms, the Court sees it as a fundamental duty to look at legislative history—hearings, speeches, even language inserted into the record specifically to establish "intent" for the purpose of future interpretation—to see what a law really means.

The flap over Meese's view that the Supreme Court should honor the "intent of the Framers" when interpreting the Constitution illustrates the importance of divining intent as part of a judge's job. Intent may be even more important in interpreting statutes, because congressional lawmakers—and now an interloping president—can be specific in signaling what a law means. "The whole thrust of the judicial inquiry," says Eugene Gressman, a University of North Carolina law professor, "has always been to determine what the Congress meant when it passed the law. And that has meant looking at the House and Senate committee reports, floor statements, or whatever it takes."

THE CONSTITUTION also makes the president's role clear: laws are to be "presented" to the president for his signature or veto—take it or leave it. As the Supreme Court said more than 30 years ago, "The Constitution limits [the president's] functions in the lawmaking process to the recommending of laws he thinks wise and the vetoing of laws he thinks bad."

But the Reagan Justice Department thinks differently. "What we're trying to say," according to Eugene Hickok, a lawyer with the Office of Legal Counsel, "is that the president is somewhat of a legislator, so his understanding counts too." Steven Calabresi, a special assistant to Meese, goes further: "The president explaining what a law means has a lot more value than what a senator or congressman has to say."

To help spread the word, the Justice Department has contracted with the nation's largest publisher of legal materials, the West Publishing Company, to include the signing statements in the "United States Code Congressional and Administrative News." These weighty tomes, known as the "you-scan" in the legal world, serve as the repositories of the real legislative histories of all major bills. Now they will include the "executive history" as well.

THE PURPOSE OF legal word games like "somewhat of a legislator" is no mystery. "It's an attempt to aggrandize the president's role in the legislative process," says Steven R. Ross, an interested party as general counsel to the House of Representatives. The Meese lawyers don't quarrel with his view. "Use of these statements would increase our role," Calabresi concedes. The Safe Drinking Water statement, then, is surely a sign of things to come, and the possibilities are almost endless. A signing statement could "interpret" a spending bill as forbidding funds for abortion; another could memorialize the president's "intent" that certain designated "freedom fighters" receive a portion of foreign aid. For now, Justice Department lawyers scoff at any such aggressive use of the statements. According to Deputy Assistant Attorney General Douglas Kmiec, "We just want to smooth out the ambiguities"—words that prompt the prudent to recheck the contents of their wallets.

There is one hurdle in the way of the Meese plan: the courts still have to buy it. This will be an interesting test of judicial principles and backbone, since "separation of powers" has become a major *conservative* judicial rallying cry in recent years. Several recent decisions have insisted that each of the three branches perform only those tasks the Constitution specifically delegates to them. A classic of the genre is Judge Antonin Scalia's lower court opinion in the Gramm-Rudman case, which struck down the budget law's key provision because of a microscopic infringement on executive power by the legislature. (The Supreme Court upheld Scalia's decision in June.) A principled Supreme Court, now joined by Justice Scalia, ought to reject any notion of giving interpretive weight to presidential signing statements as a flagrant interference in congressional prerogatives.

But all the Court's separation-of-powers pronouncements so far have been in cases holding that the Congress has interfered with the president. Will an increasingly conservative Court feel the same way when the issue arises the other way around? "All I know is we keep losing," says Ross. A loss this time would give the White House an important new edge in the struggle over statutory interpretation: the last word.

JEFFREY TOOBIN

Jeffrey Toobin is a lawyer in New York.

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Democracy under house arrest.

KOREA'S CONSCIENCE

Seoul

Kim Dae Jung, the main leader of the South Korean opposition, inadvertently caused some changes in his quiet west Seoul neighborhood when he returned from exile last year. The security police set up 11 sentry boxes on nearby street corners to monitor Kim and intimidate his steady flow of visitors. The police occupied several neighboring homes, and stationed 100 men on permanent guard duty. Whenever Kim leaves, he is followed by three carloads of police. If they suspect he intends to address a political rally, they call for several hundred reinforcements, who circle his home and prevent him from going out. He jokes that there are as many police assigned to him as to Chun Doo Hwan, the general who seized the Korean presidency in 1980.

This large security police presence is partly meant to convey the impression that Kim Dae Jung is a dangerous subversive who is possibly in league with North Korea. In fact, Kim has always advocated nonviolence and he is very much a moderate. In America he would be a mainstream Democrat or even a Republican. He criticizes the huge government and quasi-government enterprises that dominate the Korean economy, and he wants to start privatizing them. He even favors an increase in foreign investment in Korea. He is second to none in his criticism of the totalitarian dynasty in North Korea, and he convincingly argues that a democratic South, rather than the present unstable, unpopular regime, is the best system to repel any Northern threats.

Kim has spent more than five years in prison and has come close to losing his life more than once. In 1971 he ran against President Park Chung Hee in a campaign marked by fraud and intimidation. He officially got 46 percent of the vote, but he and many others believe he actually won. That year a truck he suspects was driven by security police agents forced his car off the road and into a crash. He still walks with a shambling gait due to the hip injury he suffered. In 1973 he was kidnapped from his exile in Japan and returned to a Korean prison. He is convinced his captors only failed to kill him because a friend stumbled in as they were abducting him.

Kim Dae Jung (pronounced Day Zhoong) was eventually released, but was arrested again in 1979 during the violent and confusing interregnum after President Park Chung Hee was assassinated by his own security police chief. In February 1980 the military used savage violence to put down a mainly unarmed uprising in the southern city of Kwangju. The official death toll was under 200, but many Koreans believe it was as much as five to ten times higher. The memories of the massacre partly explain the continued unpopularity of President Chun Doo Hwan, who commanded the troops.

Somehow, Kim Dae Jung was convicted of instigating the uprising. He was sentenced to death, and the sentence was reduced only after U.S. intervention. (In what many Koreans believe was the other part of the bargain, a very pleased Chun Doo Hwan was Ronald Reagan's first official visitor in 1981.) Kim spent time in exile in America before returning to Korea in February 1985. He is still technically under a suspended 20-year prison sentence that could be reinstated at any time.

Kim recounts this terrifying saga in a cool, matter-of-fact tone. He seems to have no personal hostility either toward the men who kidnapped and tried to kill him or toward those who gave the orders. His motto, which is also the title of one of his books, is "Conscience in Action."

WHAT DOES BOTHER him is the argument that Korea's tremendous economic growth could not have occurred without the military supposedly guaranteeing "stability." The economic statistics are undeniable: an average annual growth rate of ten percent from 1962 onward, and a level of income per capita that rose from $80 in 1960 to $1,884 in 1983. Korean War veterans returning to Seoul are stunned that the smoking heaps of rubble they left behind have been transformed into a gracious, clean, modern metropolis. Even more impressive, South Korea is almost alone in the Third World in not basing this growth on the export of a few primary products. The country has built a diversified industrial structure, including textiles, steel, chemicals, auto manufacturing, and even shipbuilding.

But there have been major costs to this success. Korea's foreign debt is $47 billion, the fourth highest in the Third World. The economy—which relies on exports far more heavily even than Japan—is acutely vulnerable in an increasingly protectionist world. Finally, the growth has partly derived from harshly regimenting working people and keeping their wages down. This repression has helped create a growing and more militant opposition, which leads to the very instability the military says it holds power to prevent.

South Korea is one of the most policed countries in the world. The main security force, the KCIA (named for the American CIA), has somewhere between 100,000 and 300,000 members. Young men in plainclothes, recognizable by their short hair and unsmiling demeanor, are stationed outside every subway entrance and certain buildings in central Seoul. Every few blocks, buses full of security police are parked permanently, with their riot helmets and shields provocatively stacked and ready. The police regularly invade the universities and high schools, looking for suspected student agitators and "leftist-tainted" books and pamphlets. Each police station has a "most wanted" bulletin board outside. The suspects, rather than appearing in standard mug shots, have been photographed speaking through microphones to crowds. There are at least 1,500 political prisoners, and Amnesty International has documented a number of cases of torture.

Koreans who have tried to form free labor unions have suffered some of the worst repression. The clothing industry is one case in point. The industry's center is the Pyonghwa (Peace) Market, a multistory complex of several

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buildings that stretches nearly half a mile across central Seoul. The market is like a rabbit warren. On each floor, dozens of small rooms open off each side of the long, dim corridors. In many of the sweatshops, a wooden platform has been raised halfway between the floor and ceiling. Its purpose is to double the work space. The clothing workers—most of them women—sit on both levels hunched over their whirring sewing machines. There is not enough headroom for them to stand erect. To improve these conditions, which also include low wages and average work weeks of up to 60 hours, the Peace Market workers created a union in the 1970s that enrolled more than 3,000 members.

The KCIA crackdown started in 1979 and gathered strength after General Chun Doo Hwan seized power in 1980. The police lined up for half a mile along Chongyegogaro Boulevard, standing only a few feet apart. Larger contingents packed the areas where the garment workers congregated, such as the hiring offices. If more than three garment workers gathered for any reason, the police promptly arrested them. Today the Peace Market union has only 200 open members.

ONE OF THE main demands of Kim Dae Jung and his opposition New Korea Democratic Party is the establishment of free labor unions. Kim, in keeping with his moderate approach, by no means advocates that a workers' movement take control of Korean industries. Instead, he argues for what he calls "a mass participatory economy," under which workers would acquire some stake in the system through stock purchases, but management would still be clearly in charge. The other overriding concern is with changing the rigged electoral system, which guarantees that Chun Doo Hwan and the other generals will be able to handpick Chun's successor in 1989. The opposition is campaigning to gather ten million signatures demanding reform in the present indirect presidential election arrangement; they also want to bring the voting date forward.

The large and generally peaceful student demonstrations of last spring also had electoral reform at the top of the list of demands. Leading and influential Catholic and Protestant churchmen (one-quarter of Koreans are Christian), along with prominent Buddhist priests, have joined in the loud call for change. Religious leaders are asking Koreans to refuse to pay their television license fees as a protest against the government's total domination of the media.

The protests forced Chun Doo Hwan to modify his intransigence. His greatest fear is that continued unrest will jeopardize the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. His representatives are negotiating with the New Korea Democratic Party about electoral change (although Kim Dae Jung, still technically under a prison sentence, is not permitted to take part).

But even as Chun agreed to talks, his security policemen were provoking violence at the opposition rallies in an effort to frighten moderates back to his side. There are probably no more than several hundred students who want to confront the police aggressively. They have helped give KCIA provocateurs an opportunity. At the most violent outburst, on May 3 in the port of Inchon, witnesses claim that undercover police joined the peaceful demonstrators and hurled stones toward their uniformed colleagues. The plainclothesmen wore distinctive clothing—so they would not be hurt by mistake after the clubbing began.

The opposition party is being more than reasonable in the ongoing negotiations, thus negating the government's suggestions that it countenances violence. The Chun regime's strongest tactic has been to argue that any continued opposition could encourage the North Koreans to invade. Some government supporters have gone even further, claiming that the reformers are really agents of the North. One particularly unfair slander is that Kim Dae Jung was a Communist in his youth.

In fact, there is almost no one in the Korean opposition who wants to import the regimented North Korean system, which is probably the closest approximation in the world today to an Orwellian nightmare. Kim Dae Jung's answer to the Chun regime's charges is persuasive. He argues that it is precisely the unpopularity of the military dictatorship that could promote Northern adventurism. "Only a democratic government," he says, "will force North Korea to abandon its long ambition to communize South Korea." He also points out that even during the Korean War there was more freedom in the country than there is today, including a system of direct presidential election.

The Korean government's dishonest tactics show how uncomfortable it is with the negotiations about election reform. That the talks are taking place at all is a tribute to the increasing strength of the opposition, and evidence of the countdown to the inaugural ceremonies of the Olympic Games. Of all the outside influences on the negotiators, the United States, with 40,000 troops stationed in the South, could be the most significant.

BUT A LARGE and growing number of Koreans feel that the Reagan administration is on the wrong side. The U.S. Armed Forces television network, which is picked up by many English-speaking Koreans, censors American programs when they are critical of the Chun government. Last spring, at least three items were cut—including an NBC interview with Kim Dae Jung. Secretary of State George Shultz visited in May, with warm words for Chun Doo Hwan. He did not meet with Kim Dae Jung or Kim Young Sam, another respected opposition leader. U.S. Ambassador Richard Walker did invite Kim Dae Jung to his Fourth of July picnic—the first time in 15 years that the American Embassy had invited Kim to anything. On the Fourth, Ambassador Walker made a speech in which he said that Americans "do not presume to suggest to our Korean friends that we favor any particular form of democratic government." This statement sounds unexceptionable. But to Koreans, it was taken as an oblique endorsement of Chun Doo Hwan's position that continued indirect elections would constitute some form of democracy.

The fall of Ferdinand Marcos last February quickened hopes among the Korean opposition. But direct analogies with the Philippines are almost certainly misplaced. In Ko-

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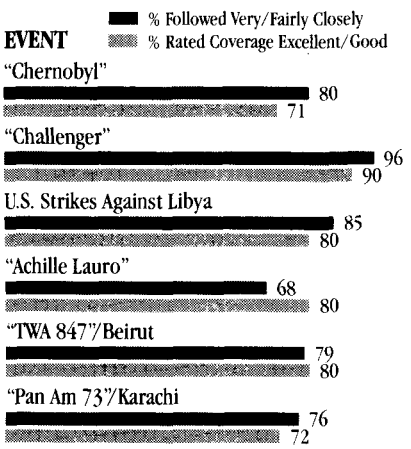

(Note: Only those who followed events very or fairly closely were asked to rate coverage of them.)

Other press issues covered, too. Gallup re-asked key questions from "People & The Press, Part 1" to check for changes, then posed 50 questions on press handling of terrorism and news leaks.

We'll detail the findings in subsequent ads. Meanwhile, here are highlights:

Ambivalence about coverage of terrorism. Majorities said press coverage of terrorism was very or mostly satisfactory and in the public interest.

But majorities also said the press gives terrorists "too much" coverage and press coverage "increases the chances of future terrorist acts."

Division over news leaks. Among the 55% who understand the term, half said news leaks serve the public interest, half said they hurt it.

Part 1 vs. 2: No changes. Large majorities continue to like and believe the press and think it supports America and strengthens democracy.

Majorities also continue to think it "favors one side" and is unduly influenced by powerful individuals and institutions.

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rea there is no growing guerrilla insurgency and no collapsing economy. These differences make American complacence even less comprehensible. Kim Dae Jung and the overwhelming majority of the opposition pose no threat to the United States. After free elections, they could immediately form a stable, popular, and democratic government. In Korea, maybe the Reagan administration will not wait until the last split second to stop backing the wrong side.

The Korean economic boom is rare in the Third World. But the Chun government treats its citizens as if they were worker ants, fit only to labor long hours without thinking or questioning. You do not build a modern economy from rubble in a few short decades with a passive, mindless populace. The generals may be in for an unpleasant surprise as they see the intelligence, resourcefulness, and courage of their own people brought into the debate over Korea's future.

JAMES NORTH

James North, the author of *Freedom Rising* (North American Library), is at work on a book about the Third World debt crisis.

OUR CHEESY DEMOCRACY

STUPID POLITICIAN TRICKS

BY FRED BARNES

MISTAKES, MISTAKES. Mary Lou Kearns, a Democrat, participated in another candidate's event. A county coroner in northern Illinois, Kearns is running for a vacant U.S. House seat. One Friday in late September, she showed up at a press conference at Northern Illinois University hosted by a state legislative candidate. Suddenly a young man in the audience began asking her questions about political morality. Should a candidate follow her own conscience or the advice of consultants? Then the questioning got more personal. Is it "moral to date and marry a married man?" she was asked. Kearns gave an unresponsive reply, and aides hastily escorted her from the room. But not before the young man stepped forward, introduced himself, and told Kearns, "You had me babysit your kid so you could go out with my father." Kearns, it turned out, had married and later divorced the man's father. The worst possible sort of story on the press conference appeared in a local paper. The headline: "KEARNS QUESTIONED ON HER MORALS." Kearns was already the underdog in the race. She still is.

The mistake by Representative George Wortley, a Republican from Syracuse, New York, was going to dinner at a Capitol Hill restaurant last summer with a fellow Republican congressman, Raymond McGrath of Long Island. Wortley and McGrath eat together once or twice a week. This time, though, McGrath brought several women along with him. (No, it wasn't what you think.) The conversation turned to political fund-raising, and McGrath advised Wortley to contact a Syracuse businessman who would "get 99 of his fat cat friends and they'll get you 100 Gs in a half-hour." It was questionable advice (and never acted on), but it turned out that the women were paid investigators for McGrath's Democratic opponent this fall. They secretly taped the conversation; then word was leaked about what had been said. Long Island didn't care, but Syracuse did. Front-page stories on the incident ran for days. Wortley was forced to deny that he had discussed a way of skirting campaign finance. Polls now show him trailing his Democratic opponent.

Given the normal course of midterm elections, Kearns and Wortley might safely assume that a fleeting campaign embarrassment wouldn't doom their chances. Not this year, though. Minor events are major in the 1986 campaign. The more insubstantial they are, the larger they loom in campaign after campaign. The political sideshow has seized the stage. Why? Because there's no important national issue, no big theme, to overshadow the petty talking points, peripheral issues, tactical boo-boos, and small-bore scandals that regularly intrude on campaigns. In 1974 Watergate served as the dominant national issue. In 1978 there was the Kemp-Roth tax cut. In 1982, the recession. This year, zilch. And the consequence is exactly what you might expect: though issues still dominate congressional campaigns, they happen to be amazingly trivial ones. Perhaps President Reagan's failed attempt to reach an arms agreement in Iceland with Mikhail Gorbachev will make war-and-peace a late starter as a dominant national issue. But don't hold your breath.

Guess what issue Representative Tony Coelho of California, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, harped on in September when he stumped against noisy Republican Representative Robert Dornan, also of California. It wasn't taxes, the deficit, arms control, etc. Coelho accused Dornan of exaggerating his military record to make it look as if he'd done combat duty, when in truth Dornan had a chance to fight in Korea and

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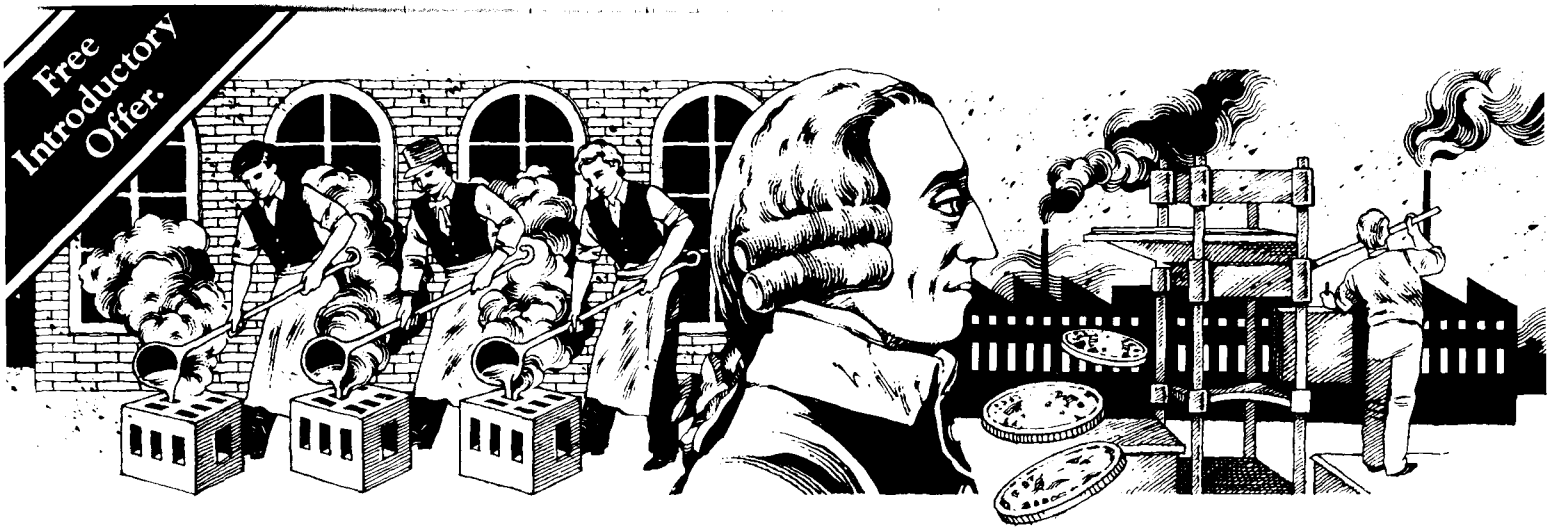

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Vietnam "but decided not to and ran away." Dornan, a hawkish conservative, claimed "a point of personal privilege" and answered with an emotional 18-minute defense on the House floor. As for President Reagan, he settles for attacks on Democratic candidates for accepting campaign contributions from Hollywood stars at a glitzy fund-raiser in Malibu.

But perhaps I'm overstating things. Control of the Senate (now 53 to 47 Republican) is at stake, after all. Well, judge for yourself. Here are some of the riveting issues in the campaign:

The War Against Drugs. OK, drug abuse is a legitimate national issue. There's little argument about that. But the candidates have made it trivial. They are challenging each other to take drug tests, and opening themselves to questions about whether they've ever smoked pot or taken drugs. One candidate who bumbled his way into trouble on drugs is William Scranton III, the Republican nominee for governor of Pennsylvania. He innocently dropped by the pressroom at the state Capitol in Harrisburg in early September to talk about his economic development plan. Asked about drugs, he admitted to "recreational" use years earlier. "My involvement was always, I think, pretty much generally in the mainstream with the people in my generation," he said. Scranton, 39, soon regretted his candor. His prior drug use had come out years earlier, but the Pennsylvania press played up his admission anyway. One paper criticized him for refusing to list the drugs he'd taken. His opponent's campaign manager accused him of bungling his first big political test. Desperate to douse the issue, Scranton arranged to speak at a high school in West Chester about the evils of drugs. Finally, the drug issue faded.

In South Carolina it is the chief issue in the governor's race. On September 15 Republican Carroll Campbell said he would "set an example" by having a drug test, and he urged Democrat Mike Daniel to do the same. Daniel declined, calling the challenge "the rankest McCarthyism I've ever seen." Things have gotten even more out of hand in Arkansas. During a September 6 debate, Republican challenger Frank White dared Democratic Governor Bill Clinton to take a drug test. But Clinton had heard that this was coming and was ready. He announced that both he and his campaign manager, Betsey Wright, had taken drug tests and passed. White was chagrined, but not for long. The next day, he announced that he, his aide, and his wife, Gay, had taken drug tests and passed. Clinton's wife should take a test, too, White said. Sure enough, she did. And passed.

DANIEL MAY HOLD out in South Carolina, but most candidates knuckle under when challenged to a drug test. In Norfolk, Virginia, on September 9, Democrat Owen Pickett said he would take repeated drug tests during the campaign and reveal the results. Republican Joseph Canada said he wouldn't take a test until after the election, which prompted Pickett to suggest that Canada was holding off so that whatever he might have taken would not show up. This was too much for Canada. He took a drug test and announced he'd passed. Daniel's refusal was bolstered by another South Carolinian, Senator Ernest Hollings. Challenged to a drug test, Hollings responded, "I'll take a drug test as soon as my opponent takes an IQ test." Nothing more has been heard of the matter.

Spies and Tapes. Senator Mark Andrews, a North Dakota Republican, has every reason to be in political trouble, what with the farm economy so depressed. But what may have hurt his campaign the most was the revelation that Bert Rand, a Washington lawyer and friend of Andrews's, hired a private detective to investigate the background of Democratic Representative Byron Dorgan, who flirted with running against Andrews but later backed out. When state tax commissioner Kent Conrad entered the race against Andrews, the investigation turned to him. Andrews said he knew nothing about the probe, which Democrats labeled a dirty trick. But polls found that many in North Dakota don't believe him, and Conrad now is running dead even with him.

IN WISCONSIN the shoe is on the other foot. The campaign of Ed Garvey, the Democratic challenger, paid $2,500 to a Washington journalist, Thomas B. Mechling, to look into a drunk driving arrest of Garvey's Republican opponent, Senator Robert Kasten. Fine so far. What got Garvey in trouble was that Mechling came to Wisconsin and questioned state officials and journalists, representing himself as an independent reporter, not a Garvey agent. When the story about Mechling broke, Republicans leaped on it. The state GOP chairman called it "a little Watergate" and demanded "full disclosure." Worse yet for Garvey, Mechling came up with no dirt on Kasten.

In Texas, where sagging oil prices have caused severe economic problems, you might think the campaign for governor would be concentrated on the economy. Nope, it's spies again, or at least the possibility of spies. An electronic bug was found October 5 in the office of Karl Rove, a consultant to Republican gubernatorial candidate William Clements. Rove suggested that aides of Democratic Governor Mark White might have gotten critical campaign information from the bug. White denied any involvement by himself or his aides. But the issue stayed on the front page, taking on a life of its own. When a reporter called White's press office in mid-October, he was told, "Nobody's here. They're all out worrying about whether they have to take [lie detector] tests or not."

In Iowa not-so-secret tapes of a television show impeded the House race of Republican Fred Grandy, who was David Eisenhower's prep school roommate but is better known as Gopher on the TV show "Love Boat." Democrats charged that Grandy had made fun of Iowa during appearances on "The Tonight Show" between 1982 and 1984. Grandy responded that he didn't recall any disparaging remarks, but he refused to allow release of the tapes. Grandy held out for a week last August, as the tapes case grew into a big issue, before showing the tapes for reporters and releasing a transcript. The *Des Moines Register* story on the screening referred to the "long-awaited Fred

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Grandy tapes." It turned out there wasn't much in them, though he likened the Miss Sioux City Rivercade to "a big testimonial to ringworm." He also said Iowans tend to mix metaphors, mentioning a woman who said a political issue had "snowballed like a house of fire."

I'm Just Folks, You're Not. Grandy's larger problem, related to the tapes, is that his opponent casts himself as the soil-on-his-shoes local fellow, and Grandy as the fancy pants from outside Iowa. This sort of posturing is a hardy perennial of politics. Grandy grew up in Sioux City, but he left two decades ago, returning last year to run for Congress. A TV spot by his Democratic foe features a woman who says, "Fred left when he was a teenager . . . I think you have to live in the area and be around the town people and the country people in the rural area to actually know . . . what we're up against in the state of Iowa." Berkeley Bedell, the retiring Democratic congressman, says in another TV ad that "Mr. Grandy and his California supporters and his New York supporters have a perfect right if they want to buy a seat in the United States Congress. But we are the ones to decide if we want to sell that seat."

IN TWO SENATE races, Republicans are playing up their own rough-edged style in cultural contrast to what they suggest are the city-slicker ways of their opponents. The first to use this tactic was Representative Ken Kramer, the GOP Senate candidate in Colorado. Kramer is short and intense; his opponent, Representative Tim Wirth, is tall and smooth. In TV commercials, Kramer speaks into the camera and says, "I'm not slick, just good." Wirth, Kramer's aides sneer, is "Ben and Sally's best friend," meaning he is chummy in Washington with Ben Bradlee, the editor of the *Washington Post*, and his wife, novelist Sally Quinn. Wirth was once favored over Kramer, but now the race is a dead heat.

So successful was Kramer with the I'm-not-slick tack that Republican Senator James Abdnor is now trying it in South Dakota, where he's been running behind Democratic Representative Tom Daschle. In a new TV ad, Abdnor says: "God didn't make me a flashy speaker, that's for sure. But we've got a lot of flashy speakers in Congress. If speeches solved problems we wouldn't have any problems. . . . So I'm not a great speaker. Heck, I'm not a great dancer either, but I'm a great fighter for South Dakota." Abdnor also has commercials making hay out of the allegedly related facts that (*a*) Daschle accepted money from a Barbra Streisand fund-raiser, and (*b*) took a contribution from Jane Fonda, who urged people to avoid red meat, a South Dakota staple.

Missed Votes. Success breeds imitation in politics. Just as Abdnor is mimicking Kramer, other Republican Senate candidates are following the example of Senator Mitch McConnell, who pulled off a big upset in 1984 by criticizing his incumbent Democratic opponent for missing votes. Now, GOP Senators Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania and Mack Mattingly of Georgia are attacking the absenteeism of their opponents, both representatives. Specter says Robert Edgar missed 113 of 277 House votes this year. Mattingly says Wyche Fowler has been "absent for Georgia." In truth, both had strong attendance records until this year, when they missed votes in order to campaign in tough primaries. Specter and Mattingly don't mention this. Missed votes, concedes Specter consultant Eddie Mahe, "tends to be a phony issue, but there's a sense among people that if we elected them, they ought to show up and vote."

Sometimes raising the issue of absenteeism backfires. In Vermont, Republican Senate candidate Richard Snelling trotted the issue out against Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy. Republican campaign officials have looked into committee hearing records of Democratic senators, and Snelling charged Leahy with skipping important Agriculture Committee sessions. Leahy said he was around for what matters to Vermont, the dairy bill, and said his attendance was better than any Vermont senator in his lifetime. Besides, it developed that in his last year in the Vermont legislature, Snelling had the second-to-worst attendance record of any legislator.

Grapegate. No issue, in fact, is too trivial to dominate a Senate race. Republican Senator Steve Symms of Idaho is an ardent Reaganite, and his opponent, Governor John Evans, is a moderate Democrat. So what's the big issue? It's the winery run by Symms's family. A former official of the winery charged in September that wine imported from out of state was being labeled as Idaho wine (sold at a higher price), and that Symms was "well aware" of this. Symms declared the charge "totally false" and blamed the Evans campaign for publicizing it. The Evans forces denied this, but they loved watching as the issue ripened. Stay tuned to this one.

OUR CHEESY DEMOCRACY

POSTMODERN HUSTLE

BY JEFFREY L. PASLEY

WE ARE SUPPOSED to be living in the postmodern age of politics. Traditional parties have lost their grip on the voters, the story goes, leaving a vacuum in which political success depends simply on creating the proper image. Stump speeches and local organizations cannot compete with television. All the postmodern candidate really needs is the money to buy advertising, the demographic specialist to target it, and—critically—the media wizard to produce it. "Consultants have promoted the self-interested line that media is 90 percent of the game," says Larry J. Sabato, author of *The Rise of Political Consultants.*

continued on page 24

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12,467 Stories You Will Never See On Television.

By John Letts

First, let me state that I have nothing against television. I even watch it . . . occasionally. I do find, however, that one can be more entertained, not to mention informed, by reading the dictionary. Not an ordinary dictionary, of course, but **Chambers Biographical Dictionary**.

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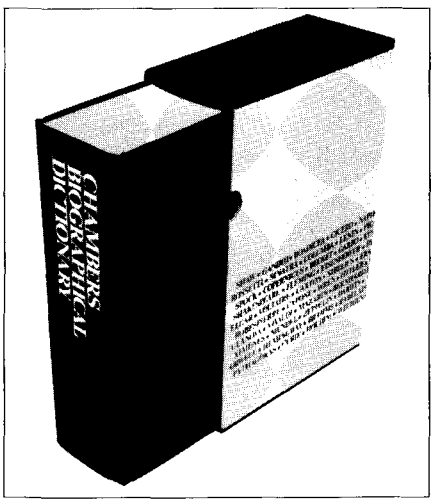

biggest villains and most outrageous characters; however, at last count, I had come across at least 12,467 notables in the book whose lives, most likely, never will make it to television, although many managed to live lives that would have challenged any soap opera.

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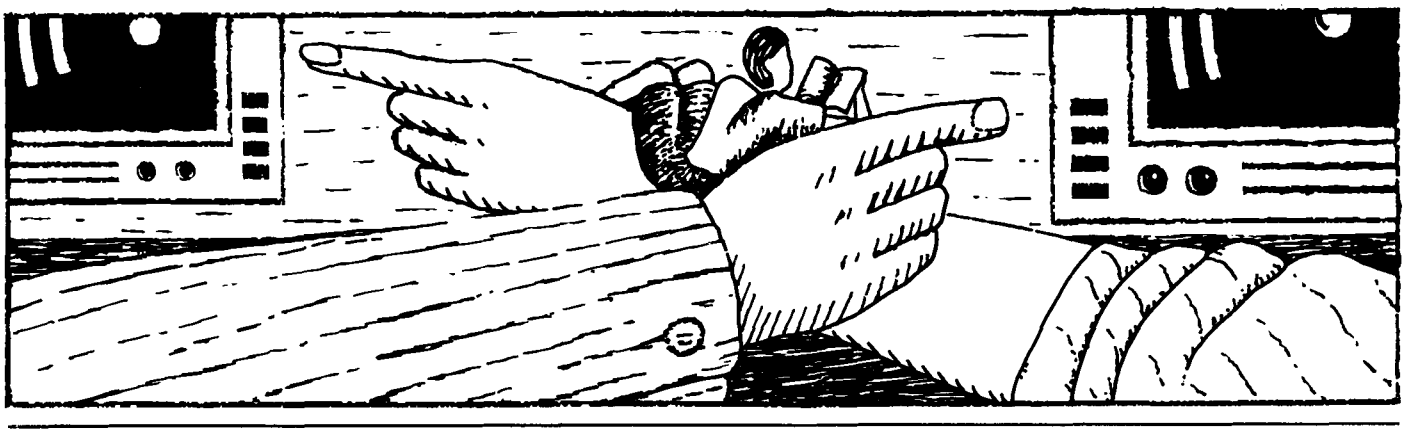

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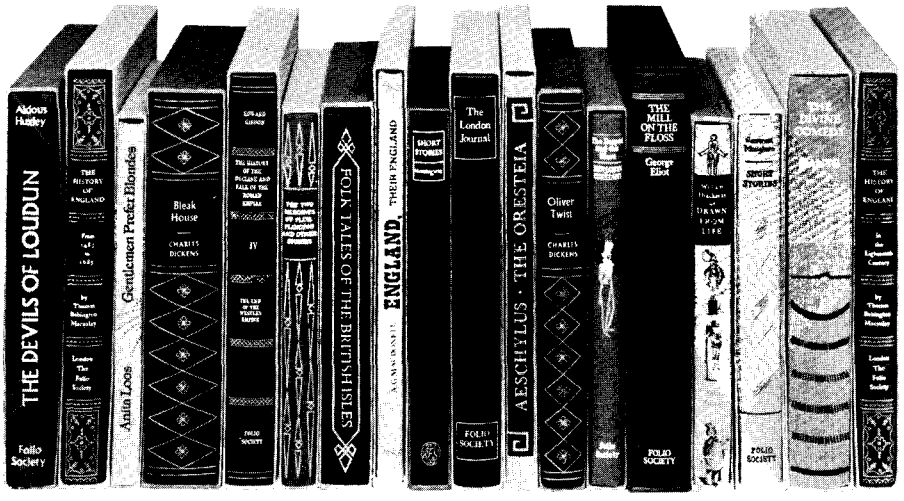

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The high cost of TV, and its supposed indispensability, leads candidates to believe they cannot hope to succeed without many millions of campaign dollars. Party leaders and insiders who anoint candidates are more attracted by a candidate's "resources" than by his ideology or political base or experience or political acumen. But of course, those who stand to gain the most from this situation are neither the candidates nor the voters, but the media wizards themselves.

TAKE THE CASE of millionaire industrialist John S. Dyson, who lost New York's Democratic Senate primary to Mark S. Green in August. Before 1986 Dyson had a relatively well-respected if unremarkable career. As New York state commerce commissioner in the 1970s, he had achieved some Warholian fame for inventing the "I Love New York" ad campaign. Still, he was not an attractive candidate for statewide office. Dyson's own media consultant, Phillip Friedman, calls him a candidate with "no natural base constituency," a non-ideological upstate WASP in a state where the Democratic Party is dominated by ethnics and liberals from New York City. Dyson was also hampered by an imperious manner, a bad temper, and a record of flirting with the Republican Party. Finally, he had lost a previous race for Congress in 1968 and one for lieutenant governor in 1982. As Friedman puts it: "We are talking about someone who is substantially away from the Democratic primary electorate."

It's not hard to see why Friedman took on this proven loser. "You can't pick your races based on who's going to win," he argues. This is perfectly sensible if "you" are getting 15 percent of every media buy whether your candidate wins or loses. Dyson spent $6 million, almost all of it on television ads. (Green spent $800,000, and only $75,000 on ads.)

What about New York's Democratic leaders, who also saddled themselves with Dyson? They too fell for the postmodern theory of politics. Governor Mario Cuomo made it clear that he wanted to send a strong (e.g., well-financed) opponent against the incumbent Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato. It was only May, and D'Amato was already on TV. This presented Democratic officials with certain choices. Green was running a traditional, low-budget campaign. The party could unite behind him, in which case the money would have to be scraped together somehow. That would mean late nights for the dons, and would drain away money from other New York Democratic war chests (notably Cuomo's). But if the candidate could just write a check, then the Democrats could fight D'Amato's ads with ads, the party brass could sleep in, and everyone would be happy.

Dyson had the two qualities that the Democrats were looking for: he had money, and he didn't think much about parting with a great deal of it. He originally planned to run for state comptroller, but party leaders convinced him that that job would be beneath him. When Dyson asked Friedman what he should run for, Friedman says he told him that "the choice was his." Dyson announced his candidacy for the senatorial nomination on June 1, and the state convention nominated him with 65 percent of the vote the next day. (Green got the other 35 percent, enough to put him on the primary ballot.)

Then Dyson officially hired Friedman. According to a spokesman, Friedman's firm, Campaign Strategies, Inc., is doing so well it "does not solicit business" and doesn't even have a brochure. Despite the firm's name, Friedman's talents and reputation lie in creating television spots rather than in campaign strategy. "If you look at where people get their information, the preponderance of that information comes from television," he enthuses. "Ask people what they know about Reagan or Dole or Cuomo. They get it all from TV." Inevitably, the campaign he designed for Dyson relied overwhelmingly on TV advertising.

THIS MAY HAVE been the best campaign that money could buy, but it was exactly the wrong one for this candidate. Since liberal activists dominate New York Democratic primaries, voter turnout is a crucial factor. Those involved in and knowledgeable about party affairs will vote for their candidate whether or not he is on TV. In order to counteract the liberal vote, a moderate candidate like John Dyson needs either a controversial race to bring out the more casual voters or a large get-out-the-vote organization. Friedman says he realized all along that if the turnout was very low, Dyson would probably lose. Nevertheless, he did virtually nothing to increase turnout. Green, meanwhile, recruited a large network of volunteers who campaigned door-to-door, on the phone, and in front of subways. Green staffers estimate that they had 2,500 people in the field by election day, at least 2,400 more than Dyson. The primary turnout was the lowest in a decade, and Dyson did indeed lose. "In a low turnout election," says Sabato, "anyone who would push for that kind of namby-pamby media that Dyson had would have to be crazy." Apparently even a good media consultant can't save a candidate with "no natural constituency."

Still, Friedman remains sanguine about his methods. He talks as though he were performing a public service, a sort of affirmative action program for politically inexperienced rich people: "You can say it's unfair, but their money is a way for people who otherwise wouldn't be part of the system to be involved. I don't think you should have to work your way up to political office. People shouldn't have to chose senators from just the next tier of elected officials down." Besides, he says, Dyson "achieved what the Democrats wanted" by running a "strong" campaign. Even so, candidate and consultant have since parted ways.

Television overkill has become Phil Friedman's trademark. He takes obscure, not particularly well-qualified rich people, and introduces them to the voters by repeatedly flashing their names and faces on TV. This is necessarily a costly undertaking. "If you are not known and have no governmental experience, you have to go out and spend some money," Friedman explains. In 1984 he masterminded John D. Rockefeller IV's successful Senate bid. But it was a close call. Rockefeller, a two-term governor and

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candidate of West Virginia's majority party, won by fewer than 30,000 votes—despite outspending his opponent by more than 12-to-1. Rockefeller sunk over $12 million of his own money into Friedman's ads and bought time in markets as far away as Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.

In 1982 Friedman ran department store heir Mark Dayton's campaign against Republican Senator David Durenberger of Minnesota. Though a more likable and competent candidate than Dyson, Dayton resembled him in many ways. He too was an unknown millionaire who had received some political appointments but really wanted to run for office. Friedman took on Dayton early in 1981, when it was apparent that he had almost no chance to beat Durenberger, the most popular man in Minnesota politics. Dayton attracted national attention for the sheer excess of his campaign. He spent more than $7 million of his own money, and still lost by 100,000 votes. Friedman says that Dayton needed the advertising to get as far as he did. In fact, the extent of Dayton's spending and the omnipresence of his television ads contributed to his defeat. Local papers made spending the major issue of the campaign. Dayton could never shake Durenberger's charge (and the public perception) that he was a wealthy neophyte trying to buy the election.

SOME OF FRIEDMAN'S competitors don't stop at spending their candidates' money with dubious effectiveness. There is, of course, Patrick Caddell of Cambridge Survey Research, guru of the George McGovern, Jimmy Carter, and Gary Hart campaigns, as well as the campaigns of four losing candidates for governor of Tennessee. Caddell is also one of the most famous and vocal proponents of postmodern politics. He is known for making extravagant claims for the electoral power of polling, media, and demographic research. One of those who was apparently impressed with those claims was Jane Eskind, another independently wealthy philanthropist and officeholder who decided this year to try for higher office. She ran against Ned McWherter, the powerful speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives, in the state's gubernatorial primary.

Eskind had a checkered electoral record. She ran unsuccessfully against Senator Howard Baker in 1978, spending $2 million and losing by 14 points. In 1980 she was finally elected to the State Public Service Commission—the group charged with the politically popular task of raising utility rates. McWherter, the clear front-runner, was the acknowledged leader of the state Democratic Party, had name recognition, control of the party organization, and the endorsements of most state leaders. His old-Southern folksy style and his roots in rural western Tennessee appealed strongly to white, rural, and conservative voters. Eskind, a Jewish woman running in a very Southern state, had no natural constituency. She and her husband had donated heavily to Tennessee black colleges and had built a reputation in the black community that they hoped would bring in the black vote.

Caddell, in the postmodern tradition, regarded his candidate less as a real person than as an image to be created on television. Rather than build on Eskind's main asset, her reputation for decency and honesty, Caddell launched a series of reckless TV attacks on McWherter, which ended up making Eskind look worse than her opponent. Several Eskind spots featured a grotesque picture of McWherter with his face disfigured and his eye nearly swollen shut. He had a chronic tear duct infection that periodically made his face swell badly. The campaigns had agreed in advance not to use the picture. (Caddell claimed he didn't know about the agreement.) Eskind had to withdraw the ads.

Like other Caddell candidates, Eskind tried to show that she wasn't bound by party or special interests. She made a point of refusing to accept PAC money, and eschewed the party organization. Her campaign relied heavily on media advertising over and above traditional organization. She also had paid staff in some areas but little presence on the street. Eskind needed to organize a large black turnout, and Caddell's campaign did little to address that need. Eskind's wealth and profligate TV spending also turned the campaign finance-integrity issue against her. When she finally was forced to disclose her finances, she had to reveal that the amount of money she raised from people not named Eskind was $122,000 out of a total of $4 million.

AT THE SAME time, Caddell's polls for Eskind were overly optimistic. According to the *Tennessee Journal*, he showed Eskind 12 points behind McWherter at the beginning of the campaign in February, closing to a tie near the end of July, and six points ahead by election day. (Polls by Peter D. Hart and Harrison Hickman showed Eskind 31 points behind in February and six points behind before the election.) The election results were McWherter 43 percent, Eskind 31 percent. Caddell's representatives claim that the undecided vote all went to McWherter on election day. Leaving aside the unlikelihood of an 18-point overnight shift, Caddell's explanation is belied by the fact that the other polls detected no such massive shift. In the end, Eskind spent over $4 million on a race in which her pollster told her she had a better chance of winning than she did, and that she was running a more effective campaign than she was. Caddell was paid both for the polls and the media campaign based on the polls.

A lousy campaign rarely causes the consultant any lingering pain. After all, he's got a contract. Somewhere in New York, John Dyson sits in his office, gnashing his teeth and plotting to ensure Alfonse D'Amato's re-election by running on the Liberal Party line. Somewhere in California, Phil Friedman talks to me on the phone philosophically about how "you pick the candidates you'll be glad you worked with." When I ask how much money he takes home from a losing campaign, Friedman laughs and demurs, "I'm always reading about how rich I am, which is a surprise to me. Anyway, if that's all, I'm going to go sit on the beach." In the age of political postmodernism, there will always be more rich people with money to burn. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

French Fervor, French Fun

Round Midnight
(Warner Brothers)
Ménage
(Cinecom)

Bertrand Tavernier's career shows a tension between strengths and sentimentalities. Such splendid works as *Let Joy Reign Supreme* and *The Judge and the Assassin* have soft spots of overemphasis. In lesser films such as *Coup de Torchon* and *A Month in the Country*, the softness swamps the strength. Tavernier's latest, *Round Midnight*, is not a complete swamping, but it's soggy.

Arturo Toscanini reportedly said that Bruno Walter was a fine conductor but he loved the beautiful passages too much. In his new film Tavernier loves jazz too much. He is so in love with it that instead of directing his film, he lets his love of it direct. He showed signs of this musical dereliction earlier. In 1985, with the American Robert Parrish, he made a documentary called *Mississippi Blues*, which dealt mostly with the music he found in Mississippi and which meandered in adulation. *Round Midnight*, a fiction film about black American jazz musicians in Paris in 1959, meanders somewhat differently but with the same slack-jawed sentimentality.

The source of the script by Tavernier and David Rayfiel—and the reason for the date of the story—is the friendship between Bud Powell and a Parisian jazz devotee named Francis Paudras. The script alters both names, and Tavernier has cast the musician's role with the famous saxophonist Dexter Gordon. Gordon arrives in Paris to play at a small club; François Cluzet, an impoverished commercial artist, hovers in the rain next to a window of the club in order to hear him. Eventually they become friends. Cluzet takes the alcoholic musician to live with him and his small daughter so that the idolater can care for the idol. Cluzet then borrows money from his estranged wife to get a bigger apartment; he accompanies Gordon to New York when the saxophonist feels he has finished with Paris; keeps Gordon straight there; then goes home to his child and job. The film ends with Gordon's return to France and to triumph.

Not an impossible idea for a film. But Tavernier does a lot to bog it down. He not only loves jazz, he is obviously in awe of his leading performer. Gordon is a large, slow, humorous, husky-voiced, magnetic man, and (as far as I can judge) his music is good. But the camera follows him like a wide-eyed fan, asking little more of him than that he be himself in front of it. Much of what Gordon says and does is amusing and sad, but not everything. Some of the time I didn't even understand the words he was speaking, and some of the rest of the time was devoted to the nobly tacit suffering of an artist's soul in a gross world. This suffering—in films, anyway—always seems to be more of an agony with jazz artists than with any other kind.

Tavernier abets his uncritical worship with narrative syrup. Cluzet, who is like Dustin Hoffman except in talent, tells Gordon that Gordon's music changed his life. How? We never see any trace of this in any way. Cluzet and his daughter have the fierce tacit understandings that French actors and their screen daughters specialize in. (We later see Gordon and his daughter in New York, without tacit understanding.) A former girlfriend of Gordon's, Lonette McKee, passes through Paris, and they have tacit understandings. Cluzet and his estranged wife have sufficient tacit understanding so that she lends him money to move and later comes back to him. As for the very last scene, apparently Tavernier tacitly understands that audiences love a finish like the end of Streisand's *A Star Is Born*.

The script, which is mostly in English, moves between the gnomic diction of jazz insiders and the desperately orotund. A jazz musician explains Gordon's drinking to Cluzet: "When you have to explore every night, even the most beautiful things you find can be the most painful." Tavernier's uncharacteristically lax camera work reflects his prostration before his subject. He doesn't seem to have any more ideas about the camera than to pull back or to close in at the start of a shot or to start a shot by scrutinizing a room—moving around the furnishings until he finds a person. The acute control of his best films, the ones cited earlier plus *The Clockmaker* and *A Week's Vacation*, is disquietingly absent.

Doting on America has been a snare for postwar Europeans from Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* to Wenders's *Paris, Texas*. Tavernier now joins them—temporarily, I hope. Isn't there anything at home that excites or enrages Tavernier as before? This film, even in its Paris sections, is tourist's gush.

Bertrand Blier has halted *his* slide into syrup. His first two films shown here, *Going Places* and *Femmes Fatales*, were deliberate abrasions both of retrograde proprieties and of advanced views on women's rights. Their skill and their sheer gall made them shocking-amusing. Then came toothless-tiger films, *Get Out Your Handkerchiefs* and *Beau-père*. With

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Down by Law. Jim Jarmusch's cool, sardonic tale of three cons escaped from a New Orleans jail. Credible until the deliberately incredible jolts us out of gullibility. (Reviewed 9/29/86)

Otello. Placido Domingo and Justino Diaz give performances that redeem this abridged version of Verdi's masterwork. Franco Zeffirelli directs with his aestheticism restrained. (10/6/86)

Partisans of Vilna. Recent interviews with survivors of the first Jewish resistance against the Germans. Naturally, simply powerful. (10/20/86)

Sid and Nancy. Surprisingly well directed and acted. The punk rocker Sid Vicious and his girlfriend Nancy in a vernacular chronicle of fate. (10/27/86)

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Ménage Blier reasserts his claim to outrage, this time floated on airy humor.

It begins and, for most of the time, continues like a Philippe de Broca film of the early 1960s—updated with sexual candor but with de Broca's use of society and logic as trampolines for high bouncing. Michel Blanc and Miou-Miou are a penniless couple living in a hut in the Paris outskirts. He loves her; she's furious at their poverty. Gerard Depardieu, a breezy ex-con, bursts into their lives, showers them with money, and takes them along on his successful housebreakings. Depardieu does his burglaries by a sort of ESP: he smells which houses are full of loot and where the loot is. Only one of these burglaries is a setup. With the others he's nonchalant about the houses' residents and the police. The poor couple is amazed and enriched.

Soon it's clear that Depardieu is after Blanc sexually. Blanc resists; Miou-Miou interposes herself; but by sheer persistence Depardieu finally gets Blanc. The trio readjusts: Miou-Miou now becomes the "extra," hanging around the male pair. Throughout, she is used in Blier's typical fashion with women: she is slapped to bring her to her senses; she is ignored when the men choose to ignore her; she is sexually utilized as either man wishes.

All this is funny because Blier's light-fingered touch, ellipsis, and pace keep the film hovering between satire of macho attitudes and amusingly blatant affirmation of them. But about an hour into the film, Blier (who, as usual, wrote his own script) runs out of insouciance and begins to plot. A murder occurs, which is quite wrong for this lacework affair; and the film ends with the trio in a situation that contradicts Depardieu's blithe harvesting of money at the start. I don't want to break a butterfly on a wheel: I just want it to remain a butterfly. The trampoline sags toward the end, and the bounce goes out of the picture.

Miou-Miou is good, Blanc is better, Depardieu is overwhelming. Force spills from him so easily that it almost hides his talent. He is an extremely gifted actor and is becoming a versatile one. Compare his work in *Danton* and *The Return of Martin Guerre* with his rollicking role in this persiflage. A pity that Blier's script didn't sustain the high-speed whirl with which it began. Still Blier, both as writer and director, is far above the ordinary, and *Ménage* is, for the most part, what he wants it to be: an ingratiating assault. □

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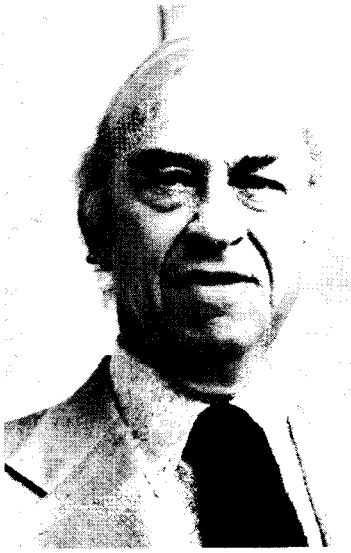

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Once More Into the Breach

> As far as I know, *Henry V* might as well have been the first Shakespeare film. To me, it *was* the first Shakespeare film. Somehow it worked, and I think it had much to do with the way I adapted the sound of the lines to the modern ear. . . . I appealed to a new public, to those who had thought that Shakespeare was not for the likes of them.

These lines from Laurence Olivier's new book, *On Acting* (Simon and Schuster), transported me back to the mid-1940s when, an untutored lout of 18 who shared the general conviction that "Shakespeare was not for the likes of him," I discovered the reality of classic theater through a sublime film. I saw the movie 27 times and labored for a while under the delusion that *Henry V* was the greatest play ever written. I committed to memory every word of Shakespeare's text and every bar of William Walton's score. I knew the names of every actor and the behavior of every character, including the four subsidiary bits Olivier anonymously played in addition to Henry. Like many young actors of the time, I was persuaded by this film to pursue a career on the stage, and my own performances were apish imitations of Olivier's stirring cadences and Robert Newton's extravagant, eye-popping Pistol.

With *Henry V*, Laurence Olivier did for my generation what rote memorization in high school, college Shakespeare courses, and the resonant warbling of Maurice Evans and John Gielgud on Broadway could never accomplish—he made Shakespeare immediate, coherent, engrossing. By God, those lines actually meant something; they were related to actual human emotions, and the people who spoke them were inhabitants of the earth, not brocaded humanoids from some far-flung planet. Olivier's *Henry V* authenticated theatrical history. Yes, scholars could quarrel with his reconstruction of the Globe Theatre and liberals would criticize his celebration of English jingoism. But who could fail to respond to the rich profusion of ideas and imagination—the way he managed the subtle transition from Elizabethan stage to metaphorical medieval landscape, the heroic battle at Agincourt with yeoman arrows whistling through the air at the French charge, the sexy languorous wooing of Princess Katherine, or his sensual-robust appeal as Henry, the chiselled features and lazy eyes half hidden by neck armor as he roused his soldiers into the breach while skillfully managing an unruly white stallion.

I had a crush on the man, and his playing of Henry impelled me toward all his available performances, whether on stage or screen. Up till then, I had imagined Olivier to be an engaging British film personality in the style of Ronald Colman or Robert Donat—lots of silken charm, no inner depth. Now I searched his work—*Clouds Over Europe*, *That Hamilton Woman*, *Rebecca*—with new eyes, seeking hints of that power and intelligence I found so riveting in *Henry V*. Soon after this film, Olivier arrived on these shores with Ralph Richardson and the rest of the Old Vic Company to demonstrate his remarkable powers of transformation as Hotspur and Justice Shallow in both parts of *Henry IV*, as Puff in *The Critic*, and, pre-eminently, as the title character in *Oedipus Rex*. (Forty years later, people swear they can still hear his offstage scream.) The man who first made his reputation in the United States as an appealing matinee idol was now saying something significant about the actor's obligation to his craft, to the theater, to the great classical roles.

I saw his movie of *Hamlet* only five times and his *Richard III* only three, though both were far more challenging roles than his Henry. *Hamlet* was somewhat marred for me by pseudo-Freudian interpolations (influenced by Ernest Jones), by self-conscious art direction, and by a certain posturing in his playing. Olivier's idea of introspection was to hood his eyes, dentalize his consonants, and let the camera circle his blondined head like a sparrow looking for a place to deposit its droppings. His Richard was a startlingly original recreation of the role he had already claimed as his property on stage (compare Barrymore's recorded falsetto shriek of "Tut! Were it further off" with the way Olivier nonchalantly throws the line away), but the movie as a whole failed to cohere. Olivier now believes that he miscast Richardson as Buckingham, but the problem may belong to the play, which departs from its fascination with a diabolical hypocrite to become a desultory series of battle scenes.

Perhaps I was now approaching this actor with a more demanding eye, but while I continued to admire him this side of idolatry, I began to think his vocal and physical mannerisms were preventing him from truly inhabiting his roles. On tour in this country with his wife, Vivien Leigh, in alternating performances of *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Caesar and Cleopatra*, his hook-nosed Caesar seemed somewhat thin after Claude Rains's philosophical depth and cordiality in the movie, and his Antony, though considerably more textured than Leigh's rather immature Cleopatra, captured the wounded lover more convincingly than it did the ruined warrior. Many of his greatest triumphs were also technical stunts—one could not help but admire his majestic Othello, for which he lowered his voice an octave, or his James Tyrone, played like an Irish version of Molière's Harpagon, or his "breakthrough," as he properly calls it, in *The Entertainer*, when this theatrical aristocrat, soon to be a peer of the realm, joined forces with the new working-class spirit in English theater that emerged after Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. (Soon he was to institutionalize this spirit by bringing such Royal Court stalwarts as Albert Finney, Alan Bates, Robert Stephens, Peter O'Toole, and his new wife, Joan Plowright, into the National Theatre at the Old Vic.)

Perhaps because of the now legendary aura surrounding his person in later career, one sometimes found him less identified with his roles than running alongside them on some parallel track. Although Olivier's book is called *On Acting*, the information about acting technique and interpretation is scanty. The book is valuable rather for informative anecdotes about Olivier's life and performances, recounted role by role. The style is chatty, almost gabby, as if the author were sitting by the fire and dictating nostalgia into an editor's tape recorder over a glass of port. He seems to have perfect recall regarding old friends and past memories. Many stories, like the time Noël Coward cured him of giggling on stage, are repeated from his autobiography, *Confessions of an Actor*. Others, such as his hair-raising account of the time he contracted stage fright playing Shylock and wouldn't permit the other actors to look him in the eyes, have already entered theatrical legend.

Sometimes Olivier sounds like one of those long-winded Garrick Club thesps

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who like to reminisce about the "Bard" and the noble deportment of the other actor laddies ("Every man Jack of them") who inhabit the boards. Occasionally he gets to maundering, and his diction becomes banal and his metaphors confused ("[Shakespeare] writes roles that any actor worth his salt would find the means to play by hook or by crook"). But good-natured as the book is, its real energy is in its anger, particularly in Olivier's resentment over his enforced retirement from the theater: "I should be soaring away with my head tilted slightly towards the gods, feeding on the caviar of Shakespeare. . . . I was made to perform, and it is not easy to be put out to grass, left to feed on memories and friendships. An actor must act." The refrain of the book, heard throughout in one form or other, is "Gone. All gone." (It is shocking to be reminded that Olivier hasn't performed on a stage since 1973, the year he was unceremoniously fired from the National Theatre he had founded at the Old Vic.)

But the book is lovely, despite its literary and structural faults, for the beauty of this man comes through on every page. Olivier thinks through memories, and his memories of himself and his friends in the theater are unusually warm and affectionate. At times, he allows himself a momentary snarl, as when he admits he modeled his Richard III on Jed Harris, whom he calls "the most loathsome man I ever met," or when, remembering his troubles with Marilyn Monroe on the set of *The Prince and the Showgirl*, he castigates her "spikiness and spite," or when he lets go a well-placed uppercut at Lee Strasberg and the Method. (" 'He's got so many faults,' Lee said [about a good character actor], and went off into a lot of hot air, sprinkled with clichés. 'The only fault he's got is the confidence you are draining from him,' I said.") And sometimes he takes credit for achievements that may not belong to him—the idea of a 19th-century setting for *The Merchant of Venice*, for example, which Jonathan Miller (in his new book, *Subsequent Performances*) says he persuaded a reluctant Olivier to accept, but which Olivier suggests he devised all by himself: "Fortunately, Jonathan and my other associates agreed with my vision." (He also claims as his the decision to play the part without the traditional hook nose, though Miller remembers that Olivier brought the nose to the first rehearsal, along with a set of artificial teeth that he was reluctantly allowed to wear.)

But usually Olivier is extremely warm-hearted toward his friends and collaborators, most of whom return the favor (and repeat the anecdotes) in their own memoirs. He and Gielgud seemed always to share something of a friendly rivalry. Gielgud was scornful of Olivier's Romeo and Olivier believed Gielgud too much infatuated with his own beautiful voice ("If he was lost for a moment, he would dive straight back into its honey"), though he concedes that Gielgud has become a much finer actor since he developed a sense of humor. About Richardson's talents and comradeship, he speaks nothing but praise, though it is alarming to read that the amiable knight, resenting Olivier's success as *Richard III* in Paris, almost threw him off a balcony in a drunken fit of envy. As for Kenneth Tynan, Olivier gives him full credit for many National Theatre successes, most notably *A Long Day's Journey Into Night* (contradicting Jonathan Miller's contention that Olivier hired Tynan as his literary director only in order to neutralize his criticism). He is inordinately warm about the charm and talents of his second wife, Vivien Leigh, and courteously neglects to mention the grief she caused him. And he credits William

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Wyler with everything he learned about film, whether it be acting, directing, or simple respect for the medium.

What he learned about film was the virtue of minimalism. For Olivier, the theater always represented the opposite: "My stage successes have provided me with the greatest moments outside myself," he writes, "my film successes the best moments, professionally, within myself." The stage, in short, was for character actors, the movies for star personalities. Partly because he lacked confidence in his own personality, Olivier has always preferred the stage. It is where he has the opportunity to lose himself in accretions of externally applied characteristics: a walk, a nose, an accent, an eye patch, a tone of voice. But if Wyler taught him screen acting, it was Tyrone Guthrie who provided him with his greatest insight into the art of acting as a whole—the now celebrated advice (offered when Olivier was playing Sergius in *Arms and the Man*) to love the character he is playing, regardless of how odious or dumb.

It is hard to believe that Olivier loved the succession of dismal film and television roles he was forced to perform following his premature retirement from the stage, though he defends them as vital—and not just for financial reasons. His physical resources depleted by a series of dreadful illnesses, sorely in need of trust funds for his children and his wife, he nevertheless claims to have embraced the opportunity to play in such movies as *The Betsy* and *The Boys From Brazil*, and ridicules those critics "who said I lowered myself playing these parts." But it is not the parts or pictures that pain a critic about Olivier's latter-day career—he is more than entitled to a relaxed actor's life in sun-drenched locations. It is his growing affiliation with superficial acting choices and uninvestigated characters. The hobbling, balding, frail old man who resorts so often to unconvincing high-pitched German or Jewish accents while drilling into Dustin Hoffman's cavities or chasing down Nazi doctors sometimes strikes one as an imposter who runs the risk of obliterating precious memories of more ambitious achievements: his dead-eyed, gap-toothed Archie Rice, his serpentine Richard of Gloucester, his athletic Henry Plantagenet.

The invention of film has given our generation the dubious advantage of watching our acting heroes deteriorate before our eyes. Movies have the unusual capacity to catch an animated moment in time; they also have the unpleasant capacity, when seen sequentially, to catch the ravages of time. In Olivier's case, it is not a question of age but of physical transformation, as if he were playing one of his more extended character parts. (In his television *King Lear*, one sympathized less with Lear's feebleness than with the actor's mighty effort to control his own.) Unlike, say, James Mason, who carried his youth in his face until he died, or Cary Grant, who still looks like a snowy-haired C. K. Dexter Haven, Olivier has exposed us to the vagaries of the aging process. The passage of years, and ghastly physical disorders, have made him virtually a different human being from the springy, swarthy brooder of *Wuthering Heights*, and one grieves for his lost youth and vitality in the same way Colette's Chéri grieved for his beautiful mistress, Léa, when he came upon her many years later buried inside a mountain of wrinkles and fat.

Still, if Olivier today lacks his old stamina or charisma, he more than compensates for them with a valiant heart and a gallant spirit. And however weak his ability to muster up a potent performance, he still retains a passionate devotion to the stage. Of this *On Acting* provides abundant testimony. The book aches with nostalgia—over dead friends, lost opportunities, the loving relationship with a live audience, all those great Shakespearean roles ("What a shame I can't play them again"). But it also pulses with good memories and a deep concern for the living theater. *On Acting* may not offer much in the way of concrete information for young people—the epilogue (a letter written in 1947 to Joan Plowright when she was playing in *Major Barbara*) contains the book's only specific technical advice, aside from his admonitions to exercise daily and avoid dissipation. But what is exemplary is the man himself—his achievement in the past, when he inspired me and my kind as the greatest actor in the English-speaking world, and his continuing inspiration for the young as one who never lost his passion or respect for the profession he helped to mold and transform. Toward the end of a great career, staring into the abyss, he still has the spark that ignited our hearts before the mighty victory at Agincourt.

Jorge Luis Borges, 1899-1986.

IN TIME'S LABYRINTH

BY OCTAVIO PAZ

I BEGAN TO read Borges in my youth, when he was not yet an author of international renown. In those years his name was a kind of password into a circle of initiates, and the reading of his works was the secret cult of a few adepts. In Mexico, around 1940, we adepts comprised a group of young men, along with an occasional less enthusiastic older partisan: José Luis Martínez, Alí Chumacero, Xavier Villarrutia, and a few more. Borges was a writer's writer; we used to follow him through the journals of that era. In successive numbers of *Sur*, I read the series of remarkable stories that later, in 1941, would make up his first collection of *ficciones*: *El jardín de los senderos que bifurcan*.

I still have the old edition, with its stiff, blue marbled leather binding, its white letters, and, in darker ink, the arrow pointing toward a south that was more metaphysical than geographical. I have not stopped reading it and conversing silently with its author. The man disappeared behind his work (this was before publicity converted him into one of its victim-gods); at times I even fancied that Borges himself was a fictional being.

The first person who spoke to me of the real man, with amazement and affection, was Alfonso Reyes. He had great regard for Borges. But did he admire him? Their tastes were very different. They were united by one of those happy anti-coincidences that bring together people of the same profession: for Bor-

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ges, the Mexican writer was the master of prose; for Reyes, the Argentine was a curious spirit, a felicitous eccentricity. Later, in Paris in 1947, my first Argentine friends—José Bianco, Silvina Ocampo, and Adolfo Bioy Casares—were also great friends of Borges. They told me so much about him that without my ever having met him I came to know him as if he were my friend, too.

Many years later, I at last met Borges in person. It was in Austin, in 1971. The meeting was proper and reserved. He didn't know what to think of me, and I had not forgiven him for that poem in which he exalts—like Whitman, but with less justification—the defenders of the Alamo. My patriotic passion did not allow me to perceive the heroism of those men; and he didn't perceive that the siege of the Alamo had been an episode in an unjust war. Borges was not always able to grasp the difference between true heroism and mere bravery. Being one of Balvanera's ruffians is not the same as being Achilles: both are figures of legend, but the first is a product of circumstance, while the second is an *example*.

Our other encounters, in Mexico and in Buenos Aires, were happier. Several times we were able to speak a bit more easily, and Borges discovered that some of his favorite poets also were mine. He celebrated these coincidences by reciting passages of this or that poet, and the conversation was transformed, for an instant, into a sort of communion. One night, in Mexico, my wife and I helped him slip away from the assault of some importunate admirers; then, in a corner, amid the noise and the laughter of the party, he recited to Marie José some verses of Toulet:

Toute allégresse a son défaut
  Et se brise elle-meme.
Si vous voulez que je vous aime,
  Ne riez pas trop haut.

C'est à voix basse qu'on enchante
  Sous la cendre d'hiver
Ce coeur, pareil au feu couvert,
  Qui se consume et chante.

(Every joy has its fault, and breaks apart of its own accord. If you want me to love you, do not laugh too loud. It is in a hushed voice that one delights, under winter's ash, this heart that, like the banked fire, smolders and sings.)

In Buenos Aires we could talk and stroll leisurely about, enjoying the weather. He and María Kodama took us to the old Lezama Park; he wanted to show us, I don't know why, the Orthodox Church, but it was closed. We contented ourselves with walking along the moist little paths, beneath the trees with their towering trunks and singing foliage. Finally we paused before the monument to the Roman she-wolf, and Borges ran his excited hands over the head of Remus. We ended up in the Café Tortoni, famous for its mirrors, its golden moldings, its generous cups of hot chocolate, and its literary ghosts. Borges spoke of the Buenos Aires of his youth, that city of "patios hollow like bowls" that appears in his earliest poems—an invented city and, nevertheless, mistress of a reality more durable than the reality of the stones: that of the word.

DRAWING BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

That evening I was surprised by his dispiritedness about the situation in his country. Although he rejoiced in Argentina's return to democracy, he felt more and more remote from what was happening there. It is hard to be a writer in our bitter countries (it may be so everywhere), above all if one has become a celebrity and is besieged by those twin enemies, treacherous envy and devout admiration, both of them myopic. Moreover, by then Borges no longer recognized the time that surrounded him. He was in another time. I understood his uneasiness. I, too, when I walk the streets of Mexico, rub my eyes with wonder: Is this what we have made of our city? Borges confided to us his decision to "go away to die somewhere else, maybe in Japan." He wasn't a Buddhist, but the idea of nothingness, as it appears in the literature of that religion, attracted him. I say *idea* because nothingness cannot be anything but a sensation or an idea. If it is a sensation, it lacks any restorative and calming power. On the other hand, nothingness as an idea calms us, and at the same time gives us strength and serenity.

I saw him again last year, in New York. We found ourselves for a few days in the same hotel with him and María Kodama. We dined together. Eliot Weinberger joined us unexpectedly, and the talk was of Chinese poetry. At the end of the evening, Borges recalled Reyes and López Velarde, and, as always, he recited some lines of the latter, those beginning: *Suave patria, vendedora de chía* ("Gentle fatherland, seller of *chía* . . ."). He interrupted himself, and asked me: "What does *chía* mean?" Confounded, I responded that I could not explain it, except as a metaphor: "It is an earthy taste." He nodded his head. It was too much and too little. I consoled myself with the thought that to express the transient is no less difficult than to describe eternity. He knew that.

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It is difficult to resign oneself to the death of a dear and admired man. From the moment we are born, we expect to die, yet death surprises us. In this instance the expected is always the unexpected, always the undeserved. It doesn't matter that Borges died at 86; he wasn't ripe for death. Nobody is, whatever his age. One may invert the philosophical phrase and say that all of us—old men and children, adolescents and adults—are fruits picked before their time. Borges survived Cortázar and Bianco, two other beloved Argentine writers; but the short time he survived them does not console me for his absence. Today Borges has become what he was when I was 20: some books, an oeuvre.

HE CULTIVATED three genres: the essay, the poem, and the short story. The division is arbitrary. His essays read like stories; his stories are poems; and his poems make us think, as though they were essays. The bridge connecting them is thought. It is therefore useful to begin with the essayist. Borges's was a metaphysical temperament. Hence his fascination with idealist systems and their lucid architecture: Berkeley, Leibnitz, Spinoza, Bradley, the various Buddhisms. His was also a mind of uncommon clarity, united with the fantasy of a poet attracted by the "other side" of reality, so that he could not help but laugh at the chimerical constructions of reason. Hence his homage to Hume and to Schopenhauer, to Chuang-Tzu and the Sixth Empire. Although in his youth the verbal extravagances and the syntactical labyrinths of Quevedo and Browne appealed to him, he was not like them. He makes one think more of Montaigne—for his skepticism and his universal curiosity, though not for his style. Also of another of our contemporaries, who is today a bit forgotten: George Santayana.

Unlike Montaigne, moral and psychological enigmas did not interest Borges much; nor did the diversity of the customs, habits, and beliefs of the human animal. History did not excite him; the study of complex human societies did not attract him. His political opinions were moral, even aesthetic, judgments. Although he expressed them with bravery and with honesty, he did so without truly comprehending what was going on around him. At times he affirmed, for example, his opposition to the Perón regime and his rejection of totalitarian socialism; at others he slipped up, and his visit to Chile when it was under military dictatorship, as well as his facile epigrams against democracy, caused consternation among his friends. Later he repented. One has to add that always, in his certainties and in his errors, he was consistent with himself and honest. He never lied or knowingly justified evil, as many of his enemies and detractors have done. Nothing was more foreign to Borges than the ideological casuistry of our contemporaries.

ALL SUCH matters were beside the point. He kindled to other subjects: time and eternity, identity and plurality, the self and the other. He was enamored of ideas. It was a contradictory love, corroded by multiplicity: behind ideas he did not find the Idea (call it God, Nothingness, or the First Principle), but rather a new and more profound plurality, that of himself. In seeking the Idea he found the reality of a Borges who was broken up into successive manifestations. Borges was always the other Borges unfolding into another Borges, until infinity. The metaphysician and the skeptic fought within him; and though it seemed that the skeptic won, skepticism gave him no peace. Instead, it multiplied the metaphysical ghosts. The mirror was its emblem. An abominable emblem: the mirror is the refutation of the metaphysical and the condemnation of the skeptic.

His essays are memorable, mainly for their originality, their diversity, and their style. Humor, sobriety, acuity—and suddenly, an unusual twist. Nobody else had written that way in Spanish. Reyes, his model, was more correct and fluent, less precise and also less surprising. Reyes said fewer things with more words. The great achievement of Borges was to say the most with the least. But he did not exaggerate. He did not fasten on to the sentence, like Gracián, with the needle of genius, nor did he convert the paragraph into a symmetrical garden. Borges served two opposed divinities: simplicity and strangeness. Frequently he brought them together, and the result was unforgettable—the naturalism of the uncommon, the strangeness of the familiar. This skill, perhaps inimitable, gives him a unique place in the literature of the 20th century. When still very young, in a poem dedicated to the shifting and changing Buenos Aires of his nightmares, he defined his style: "My verse is about interrogation and proof, in order to obey that which is hidden." This definition embraces his prose as well. His work is a system of linked vessels, and his essays are navigable streams that empty naturally into his poems and stories. I confess my preference for the latter. His essays do not help me to comprehend either the universe or myself; they help me rather to understand better Borges's own surprising inventions.

Although the subjects of his poems and stories are quite varied, he has a single theme. But before touching on this point, let us clear up a confusion. Many deny that Borges was really a Latin American writer. The same charge was made against the early Darío; but it is an insult no less perverse for being repeated. The writer belongs to one land and one blood, but his work cannot be reduced to nation, race, or class. Moreover, one can reverse the accusation and say that the work of Borges, for its transparent perfection and for its limpid architecture, is a living reproach to the dispersion, the violence, and the disorder of the Latin American continent. The Europeans were amazed by the universality of Borges, but none of them observed that his cosmopolitanism was not, and could not have been, anything but the point of view of a Latin American. The eccentricity of Latin America consists in its being a European eccentricity: it is a different way of being Western, a non-European way. At once inside and outside the European tradition, the Latin American can regard the West as a totality, and not with the fatally provincial vision of a Frenchman, a German, an Englishman, or an Italian. No one saw this better than a Mexican, Jorge Cuesta; and an Argentinian, Jorge Luis Borges, realized it in his writings better than anyone else. The real theme of these discussions should not be Borges's lack of Americanness, but rather the acceptance once and for all of his work as an expression of a universality implicit in Latin America since its birth.

BORGES WAS not a nationalist. Still, who but an Argentine could have written many of his poems and stories? He also suffered from an attraction to the darkness and the violence of America. He felt it in its lowest and least heroic manifestation—the street brawl, the knife of the bullying and resentful *malevo*. A strange duality: Berkeley and Juan Iberra, Jacinto Chiclano and Duns Sco-

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tus. The law of spiritual gravity governs Borges's work: the macho Latin faces the metaphysical poet. The contradiction that informs his intellectual speculations and his fictions—the struggle between the metaphysical and the skeptical—reappears violently in the field of feelings. His admiration for the knife and the sword, for the warrior and the ruffian, was perhaps the reflection of an innate inclination. In any case, it appears again and again in his writings. It was perhaps a vital and instinctive response to his skepticism, his civilized tolerance.

In his literary life this tendency expressed itself as a love of debate and of individual affirmation. In his early days, like almost all the writers of his generation, he was a part of the literary vanguard and its irreverence. Later he changed his tastes and ideas, not his attitudes. He stopped being an extremist, but continued to cultivate his witty tone, his impertinence, his brilliant insolence. In his youth, the target had been the traditionalist spirit, and the commonplaces of the academies and the conservatives. In his mature years, respectability transformed him: he became youthful again, ideological and revolutionary. He mocked the new conformism of the iconoclasts with the same cruel humor with which he had poked fun at the old one of the traditionalists.

HE DID NOT turn his back on his times, and he was brave when faced with the circumstances of his country and of the world. But above all he was a writer, and the literary tradition seemed to him no less alive and present than current events. His curiosity ranged in time from contemporary subjects to ancient ones, and in space from the close at hand to the far off, from gaucho poetry to Scandinavian sagas. He studied and quickly mastered the other classicisms that modernity has discovered, those of the Far East and of India, of the Arabs and the Persians. But this diversity of reading and plurality of influences did not turn him into a tower of Babel: he was not confusing or prolix, but clear and concise. Imagination is the faculty that associates, that builds bridges between one object and another; it is the art of correspondences. Borges had this faculty in the highest degree, joined to another no less precious: the intelligence to stick to the essential, to weed out parasitic growths. His was not the historian's skill, or the philologist's, or the critic's; it was a writer's skill, an active skill that retains what is useful and throws out the rest. His literary loves and hatreds were profound and reasoned, like those of a theologian, and violent, like those of a lover. He was neither impartial nor fair. He could not be: his critical faculty was the other arm, the other wing, of his creative fantasy. Was he a good judge of himself? I doubt it. His tastes did not always coincide with his genius, nor his preferences with his true nature. Borges did not resemble Dante, Whitman, or Verlaine, but rather Gracián, Coleridge, Valéry, Chesterton. No, I am mistaken: Borges resembled, above all, Borges.

HE WORKED in traditional forms and, except in his youth, the changes and violent innovations of our century scarcely tempted him. His essays were truly essays; he never confused this genre, as is now the custom, with the treatise, the dissertation, or the thesis. In his poems, free verse predominated at first; later, canonical forms and meters. For an extremist poet, he was rather timid, especially if the somewhat linear poems of his first books are compared with the odes and the complex constructions of Huidobro and other European poets of that period. He did not change the music of Spanish verse or reshape its syntax: he was neither Góngora nor Darío. Nor did he discover poetic heights or depths, as did some of his contemporaries. Still, his verses are unique, unmistakable; only he could have written them. His best verses are not sculpted words; they are sudden lights or shadows, gifts of unknown powers, true illuminations.

His stories are extraordinary for the felicity of his fantasy, not for its form. When writing works of the imagination, he did not feel attracted to the adventures and verbal vertigos of a Joyce, a Céline, or a Faulkner. Always lucid, he was not swept away by the passionate wind of a Lawrence, which sometimes stirs up clouds of dust and at other times clears clouds from the sky. Equally distant from the serpentine sentences of Proust and the telegraphic style of Hemingway, his prose surprises by its balance—neither laconic nor prolix, neither languid nor clipped. This is a virtue, and a limitation. With such a prose one can write a story, not a novel. One can sketch a situation, fire off an epigram, seize the shadow of a moment, not recount a battle, recreate a passion, penetrate a soul. His originality,

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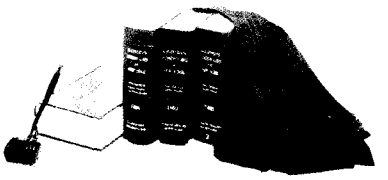

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DORIS MARIE PROVINE

Must judges be trained as lawyers in order to be effective or can nonlawyers serve equally well? In seeking to answer this highly controversial question, Provine has conducted an unprecedented survey of the performance of lay versus lawyer judges. She argues persuasively that the case against nonlawyer judges has been weighted in favor of the interests of lawyers, rather than of the public. She adds new dimensions to our understanding of the ethics of professionalism and the American insistence on credentials.

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in prose as in verse, is not in his ideas and forms but in his style, a seductive alliance of the simplest and the most complex; in his wonderful inventions; and in his vision. It is a unique vision not so much for what he sees as for the place from which he sees the world and himself. A point of view, more than a vision.

His love of ideas was extreme. Absolutes fascinated him, although he ended up disbelieving them all. As a writer, on the other hand, he felt an instinctive distrust of extremes. A sense of measure almost never left him. He was baffled by the excesses and the enormities, the mythologies and the cosmologies of India and of the Nordic peoples, but his idea of literary perfection was of a limited and clear form, with a beginning and an end. He thought that eternities and infinities could fit on a page. He frequently spoke of Virgil, and never of Horace. The truth is that he resembled not the former, but the latter: he never wrote, nor did he try to write, a long poem, and he always kept within the limits of Horatian decorum. I do not mean that Borges adhered to the poetics of Horace, but rather that his tastes led him to prefer measured forms. In his poetry and in his prose, there is nothing cyclopean.

FAITHFUL to such an aesthetic, he invariably heeded the counsel of Poe that a modern poem should not have more than 50 lines. But it is curious, modernity: almost all the great modern poems are long poems. The characteristic works of the 20th century—I think, for example, of Eliot and Pound—are animated by one ambition: to be the divine comedies and the paradises lost of our age. The belief that sustains all these poems is this: that poetry is a total vision of the world, or of the drama of man in time. It is history and religion. I said before that the originality of Borges consisted in having discovered a point of view. For this reason, some of his better poems take the form of commentaries on our classics—Homer, Dante, Cervantes. Borges's point of view is his unfailing weapon: he turned all traditional points of view on their heads, and obliged us to regard the things we see and the books we read differently. Some of his fictional pieces read like stories in *A Thousand and One Nights* written by a reader of Kipling and Chuang-Tzu; some of his poems remind one of a poet from the *Palatine Anthology* who might have been a friend of Schopenhauer and Lugones. He practiced the so-called minor genres—stories, short poems, sonnets—and it is wonderful that he should have achieved with them what others have attempted with long poems and novels. Perfection has no size. Often he attained it by the insertion of the unusual into the ordinary, by the alliance of the interrogative form with a perspective that, by mining some appearances, discovers others. In his stories and in his poems Borges interrogated the world, but his doubt was creative, and brought into being the appearance of other worlds, other realities.

His stories and his poems are the inventions of a poet and a metaphysician. Thus they satisfy two of mankind's central faculties: reason and fantasy. It is true that Borges does not provoke the complicity of our feelings and passions, dark or light: piety, sensuality, anger, compassion. It is also true that his works tell us little or nothing about the mysteries of race, sex, and the appetite for power. Perhaps literature has only two themes—one, man among men, his fellows and his adversaries; the other, man alone against the universe and against himself. The first is the theme of the epic poet, the dramaturge, and the novelist; the second, the theme of the lyric and metaphysical poet. In Borges's works, human society and its many and complex manifestations, which run from the love of two people to great collective deeds, do not appear. His works belong to the other half of literature, and all have a single theme: time, and our repeated and futile attempts to abolish it. Eternities are paradises that become prison sentences, chimeras that are more real than reality—or perhaps I should say, chimeras that are no less unreal than reality.

Through prodigious variations and obsessive repetitions, Borges ceaselessly explored that single theme: man lost in the labyrinth of a time made of changes that are repetitions, man preening before the mirror of unbroken eternity, man who has found immortality and has conquered death but neither time nor old age. In his essays this theme is transformed into paradoxes and antinomies; in the poems and stories, into verbal constructions that have the elegance of mathematical theorems and the wit of living beings. The discord between the metaphysician and the skeptic is insoluble, but the poet makes of it transparent edifices of interwoven words: time and its reflections dance upon the mirror of our immediate awareness. These are works of rare perfection, verbal and mental objects made according to a geometry at once rigorous and fantastic, rational and capricious, solid and crystalline. All these variations on a single theme tell us one thing: the works of man, and man himself, are nothing but configurations of evanescent time. He said it with impressive lucidity: "Time is the substance of which I am made. Time is a river which carries me off, but I am that river; it is a fire which consumes me, but I am that fire." The mission of poetry is to throw light upon what is hidden in the folds of time. It took a great poet to remind us that we are, at the same time, the archer, the arrow, and the target.

(Translated by Charles Lane.)

WHEN THE HEAD IS OFF . . .

The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine by Robert Conquest

(Oxford University Press, 412 pp., $19.95)

In 1933 a major crime was committed in the Soviet Union: millions of peasants were starved to death. It is appropriate indeed to call this a "terror-famine." It was a unique event in world history. There have been many famines, of course, and in wartime it is considered entirely proper to impose death by starvation on enemy civilians in a besieged city; one has only to recall the tragedy in Leningrad in 1941-42. But to starve one's own people, to make no attempt to send relief (in fact, to prevent relief from being sent), to take the lives of millions of peasants in the name of a "workers' and peasants' government," while loudly denying that there is a famine at all—this is surely unprecedented.

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Worse, during the same period the supply of food in the Soviet Union as a whole was certainly sufficient to sustain life, and the means to move it to the affected regions were available (unlike the conditions that had prevailed during the famine of 1921). It was no accident that the peasants who starved did so in the areas of formerly prosperous agriculture that traditionally enjoyed grain surpluses, since these were precisely the areas where resistance to collectivization was bound to be greatest. Thus those peasants had to be taught a particularly severe lesson—to be, in Stalin's own words (as reported by a Soviet scholar) "dealt a devastating blow."

ROBERT CONQUEST'S powerful and well-documented book begins very properly with the historical and ideological background of the famine. From its beginnings Marxism-Leninism had demonstrated an ambivalent and contradictory attitude toward the peasants. They, or their poorer strata, were allies in the struggle to overthrow landlords, capitalists, the czar. But once in possession of the landlords' land, their private-property instincts tended to take over. So they were seen, at best, as temporary and vacillating allies. Relations reached the breaking point during the period of "war-communism," when food was taken by force from the peasantry.

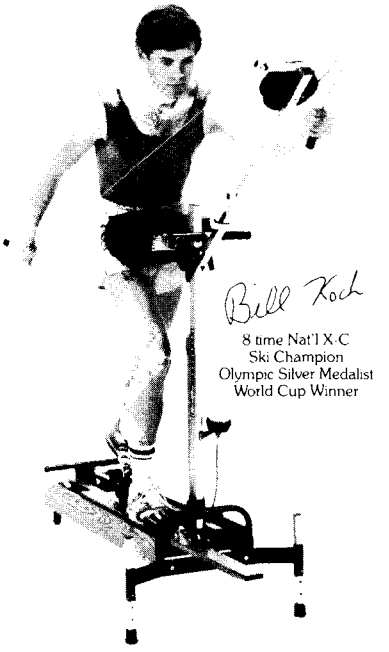
Conquest's picture of this period, however, is somewhat lopsided. Deliveries to the state at fixed (that is, low) prices were introduced as early as 1916, when the czar was still on the throne, and they continued, though ineffectively, under the provisional government. While it is certainly true, then, that ideological enthusiasm and utopian illusions contributed to the excesses of Lenin and his comrades, Conquest goes too far in denying that these were also "war measures." Requisitioning was justified at the time not by some ideological imperative that made it necessary to take food from peasants without a quid pro quo; in the ruin of war and civil war there was no quid pro quo available. Ideology would have prescribed "product exchange," not confiscation.

Then came the New Economic Policy (NEP), and much happier days for the peasants. Conquest discusses this period in a most sensible and balanced way. The Bolsheviks were to some extent victims of their own "class" analysis. They urgently needed larger off-farm surpluses, to feed the cities and for export. Therefore they needed a successful peasantry. But a successful peasant became, in their eyes, a class enemy—a kulak. To base agriculture on the "middle peasant" was to base it on a moderately unsuccessful peasant. In 1925, Bukharin faced the dilemma, and uttered the words "Get rich." But he soon was forced to retreat, and so peasant policy became bogged down in insoluble contradiction. The survival of the obsolete three-field system, with sometimes hundreds of strips, as well as the survival of peasant communal institutions that virtually supplanted rural soviets; the belief in the superior efficiency of large-scale agriculture; the further belief that peasants were stupid and conservative (and petty-bourgeois to boot)—all contributed to the decision to push ahead with collectivization.

The timing of collectivization, and its speed, was partly a function of the outcome of political struggle (the triumph of the Stalin faction), partly of the so-called grain procurement crisis of 1927-28 (itself largely due to errors in price policy). It was also partly a consequence of the hugely ambitious first five-year plan of crash-program industrialization. In view of the catastrophic consequences, it is not correct to assert that forcible collectivization was somehow "necessary" for industrialization, though several Soviet commentators continue to argue thus. But the intention was to gain control over a larger off-farm food surplus—of this there is no doubt.

SO STALIN AND his associates mobilized the Party to destroy the independent peasantry, and by means fully as brutal as Conquest describes. "Dekulakization"—the deportation of the better-off peasants and their families as "class enemies"—deprived Soviet agriculture of its more efficient farmers, and caused untold suffering and loss of life among the deportees. Conquest does not quote Stalin's vicious remark on this subject: "When the head is off, one does not mourn for the hair." He does rightly make it clear that these so-called kulaks were quite modest farmers by any standard. (You owned a horse and three cows, you hired a laborer for a few weeks, and you became a state criminal simply by being what you were.) Conquest acutely remarks the peculiarity of this sort of class analysis: a middle peasant who gained property became a kulak, but a "kulak could not become a middle peasant by losing his."

Even kulak children were harshly per-



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secuted. In addition, one could be deported as a kulak or "sub-kulak" (*podkulachnik*) if one opposed collectivization, even if one had no horse and had never employed anyone. Conquest cannot be accused of exaggeration in his grim description of the process, or of "painting in dark colors." Reality was dark enough. The deportations began on a small scale in 1929. They were intensified in 1930, and repeated in subsequent years. The purpose was to force the remaining peasants to join collectives by demonstrating to them the only alternative. In case they did not learn the lesson, those remaining outside were subject to heavy and arbitrary taxes and delivery quotas. When, in March 1930, Stalin published his hypocritical article "Dizzy with Success," claiming that overzealous officials had wrongfully coerced peasants, over half of the newly collectivized peasantry walked out within weeks. It took a year and more to force them back in again.

The collectives were subject to heavy compulsory delivery obligations. Little was left to feed peasants and livestock. Some of the latter were killed by their former owners, as a gesture of protest. Tractors were few, and half the horses had perished. In many areas the peasants expressed their feelings by a kind of silent strike. A British agricultural expert toured the country in 1932, and his reports (now housed in the Public Record Office in London) were vivid indeed. Peasants told him: We have not been paid; we have little food. Why should we work? Officials asked him: What shall we do? The peasants are not working. When, in May 1932, Stalin relaxed the pressure and allowed free markets to open, state procurements of grain plummeted and controls proved ineffective. As one Soviet source put it, "Many collective farms ceased to be under the organizing influence of the party and state"—in other words, there was a crisis of authority in the villages.

This part of the background to the "terror-famine" is missing from Conquest's book. It is a pity, because Stalin's brutal measures did have some sort of cause—which, of course, in no way excuses what he and some of his henchmen did. Clearly, he believed that the peasants were concealing food, and that local officials were not ruthless enough in dealing with them. Many officials were purged, and procurement quotas were enforced with the utmost rigor, with the campaign concentrated on the areas that normally had grain surpluses—that is, generally the south. Since some of the grain was distributed to peasant families, orders were given to search homes and to confiscate. Stalin saw the peasantry, even the new kolkhozy, resisting the state's exactions, and he decided to teach them a lesson they would never forget.

Did Stalin really intend that many millions should die? In his biography of Stalin, Adam Ulam, no friend of the despot, observed that

> Stalin and his closest collaborators had not willed the famine, and even if it had a positive side from the regime's point of view in teaching the peasants that it was useless to struggle against history . . . it was painful to lose so many workers and soldiers.

It may be that Stalin convinced himself that those he sarcastically called (in his letter to Sholokhov) the "honorable cultivators" would be able to conceal enough food from the requisition squads to see them through. Evidently he believed that the kolkhoz chairmen, who were mostly peasants themselves, and even many rural Party officials would try to hold back supplies. Also, as a British official observer reported at the time, the area sown and harvested had been overstated in the statistics reaching Moscow. But the fact remains that those rural officials who tried to show, through food and feed balances, that too much was being taken were dismissed, or imprisoned as "kulak-sympathizers," and orders went out forbidding even the drafting of any such balances. Ruthless measures were ruthlessly enforced by order from above. This was a man-made famine, then, with Stalin primarily responsible for the policies that led up to it.

SO IT WAS that the peasantry was starved into submission and millions died. It was, again, a major crime. The consequences—for the peasants, for agriculture, for the psychology of the rulers themselves—cast a very dark and long shadow. Particularly sickening, even in retrospect, was Stalin's bland denial that there was any famine at all, as well as his refusal to take or allow any relief measures while whole villages were dying out in affected areas. Official Soviet histories of the period continue to omit any mention of the famine. Still, as Conquest duly notes, some Soviet historians, during the years 1964-70, did try to tell some of the real story, but the hard-liners stopped them.

Conquest also refers to the appearance of frank descriptions of the famine in a few literary works. (Surprisingly, one of the authors, Ivan Stadnyuk, has a "Stalinist" reputation.) But Conquest's claim that nothing of this sort has been published in the Soviet Union since 1983 is wrong: a devastating picture of man-made famine on the Lower Volga by Dimitri Alekseyev appeared in 1985 and was favorably reviewed, with long quotations, in the literary monthly *Nash sovremennik*. There are also uncensored samizdat written in Russia and memoirs published abroad, which Conquest draws upon. How can one explain this combination of myth in official histories and occasional glimpses of the tragic reality in literature? Is it a case of poor coordination between different bureaucracies, or is it deliberate?

How many died? There was a census in 1937, but its results were scrapped and its authors shot as wreckers. Another census was taken in 1939. Conquest assumes, with inadequate proof, that it overstated the total population. But it could well be that, having shot the officials in charge of the first census, Stalin had to accept the true figure from their successors two years later. While there is some evidence that local census officials were ordered to "inflate" the populations of certain cities, these figures could

Lives Of Great Men All Remind Us

As the weather wears them down,
These our most brazen men about town
Remind us of the common fate
That's theirs who only meditate,
Erect in parks or slouched inert
On pedestals where squirrels flirt
And pigeons drop their daily poop.
Ah, what a sad, discolored troup!

Down from his beard, across his chest,
The rains have darkened Lincoln's vest,
As though he had been vomiting
All through winter and into spring,
And Washington upon his horse
Suffers as visible remorse—
Witness those seeming tracks of tears
Across his cheeks and down his ears.

All bronze thus mourns the nation's fate
And heeds, in silence, its debate.

TOM DISCH

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well have included the inmates of the "Gulag archipelago," who were certainly not represented in the census in the areas of the labor camps, as Conquest himself pointed out in *The Great Terror*. Anyhow, even if the 1939 totals were correct, well over ten million people disappeared during the '30s, and most must have been peasants. In all probability the victims of the famine exceeded five million. Conquest's own estimate of seven million is well within the bounds of possibility. (Conquest is also right to point out that the number of livestock casualties was published, while the number of human casualties remains a state secret to this day.)

THERE IS ONE matter on which one must disagree with Conquest. It is what could be called the Ukrainian aspect. That the majority of those who died in the famine were Ukrainian peasants is not in dispute. But did they die because they were peasants, or because they were Ukrainians? As Conquest himself points out, the largest number of victims proportionately were in fact Kazakhs, and no one has attributed this to Stalin's anti-Kazakh views. Russians who happened to be in the area affected by the "terror-famine"—in Lower Volga and North Caucasus for example—also died. Again, resistance to collectivization was greatest in the "traditional" grain surplus areas, of which the Ukraine was the largest; that is why it was in the Ukraine that Stalin used hunger to break resistance. Moreover, the anti-religious violence that coincided with collectivization, which is well described by Conquest, affected the Russian clergy as much as the Ukrainians. To be sure, campaigns against Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalism" were also raging in the '30s, as Conquest rightly shows. Still, the terror decapitated the leadership and intellectuals of *all* the republics in the Soviet Union, Russia included.

Yes, the Ukrainian countryside suffered terribly. But Conquest seems prone to accept the Ukrainian nationalist myth. Thus it is going too far to assert that there was "an effective Ukrainian state" established by Bogdan Khmelnitsky. True, though they became vassals of Moscow in 1654, the hetmans for a time retained a considerable degree of autonomy (and claimed more). But most of what is now the Ukraine remained part of the Kingdom of Poland, or under the Crimean Tartars, until the reign of Catherine II (who abolished the hetmans). It is hardly credible that, as Conquest claims, there were literally no schools of any kind east of the Dneiper in 1800. And turning to more recent times, readers are left unaware that the urban population of the Ukraine, even as late as 1930, consisted mostly of Russians and Jews. (The relationship of Ukrainians and Jews, from Khmelnitsky to more recent times, is another subject altogether.) Finally, while Ukrainian nationalism undoubtedly exists, many Ukrainians have played active roles in both the czarist and the Soviet service, and the intensity of national feeling seems to be much greater in the western than in the eastern Ukraine. The picture is more complex, then, than Conquest allows.

Will the new generation of Soviet leaders at last come clean on the horrible things that happened in the 1930s? Alas, the auguries are unfavorable. In *Pravda* of May 10, 1986, for example, Boris Ponomarev referred as follows to the very years about which Conquest has written:

> A grandiose epic in the history of the party and of the Soviet government was the conversion of millions and millions of peasants on to the road of collective mechanized agriculture. . . . As is known there were some distortions and errors, but they were speedily corrected, and the collective system was strengthened from year to year.

This is how a representative of the older generation of leaders would like to present these events. Of course, the life of today's Soviet peasants has improved, and agriculture is in fact heavily subsidized. In this, as in many other respects, the contrast with Stalin's time is striking. The official Soviet stress on continuity from Lenin to the present day has the paradoxical effect of blurring this contrast, thereby quite intentionally lending support to those in the West who believe that the Gulag is still with us and that Gorbachev is a sort of Stalin minus a moustache. And yet Gorbachev refused, in his recent interview in *Humanité*, to contemplate even the existence of "Stalinism." Whatever his other virtues, he seems unlikely to open what must seem to him a politically dangerous (and unnecessary) can of worms.

ALEC NOVE

Alec Nove is professor emeritus at the University of Glasgow and the author of, among other books, *An Economic History of the U.S.S.R.* (Penguin).

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LIMITATIONS OF SPACE

Strategic Defense: "Star Wars" in Perspective
by Keith B. Payne

(Hamilton Press, 250 pp., $9.95 paper)

Star Wars: Suicide or Survival?
by Alun Chalfont

(Little, Brown, 169 pp., $16.95)

Strategic Defenses: Two Reports
by the Office of Technology Assessment

(Princeton University Press, 486 pp., $50, $12.50 paper)

Few issues today have generated as much controversy as the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), known more widely as the "Star Wars" program. Like the aerospace companies scrambling for SDI research and development contracts, the publishing companies have been quick to sign up virtually anybody who has something to say about Star Wars. One Pentagon wag is reported to have observed that if we burned everything that has been written on SDI, we would probably have nuclear winter. Alas, that is what most of the literature on SDI deserves.

The question of whether the defense against ballistic missile attack is either desirable or feasible does not lend itself easily to public exposition. In addition to the often arcane logic of nuclear deterrence, the reader must also grapple with a bewildering array of new acronyms and concepts that have become the lingua franca of the Star Wars debate. Terms such as "boost phase intercept," "preferential defense," "leakage rates," BMC3, and SATKA (the latter, for example, meaning surveillance, acquisition, tracking, and kill assessment), all readily bandied about, probably do more to inhibit public understanding than to foster it. And on top of it all is the mind-boggling technology itself, which even scientists have a hard time comprehending.

Still, it may be said that making the case for SDI is, in some respects, much easier than making the case against it. Offering the prospect of protection from the threat of nuclear devastation, rather than the satisfaction that it would be met with an equal devastation in return (in short, the prospect of self-preservation rather than of revenge from the grave) is naturally more attractive. Opponents of SDI are often forced into the uncomfortable position of having to explain why remaining defenseless against a Soviet nuclear attack is a good thing, why changing this state of affairs could court instability and perhaps even war.

Even on the difficult terrain of the scientific debate, the pro-SDI lobby can appeal to American optimism, to American pride in the use of technology to solve problems. To play upon this faith, prospective defensive systems are often depicted in video game versions, or in glossy pictures and photo-realistic illustrations, as if they were already at our disposal. In fact these systems are decades away from realization—those, that is, that can be realized at all. In contrast, arguing that SDI will not work, and showing all the ways the Soviets could overcome an American defense shield, seems negative, defeatist, downright un-American.

Moreover, supporters of SDI can always conjure up a specter of the Soviet threat. They insist that the Soviets are already ahead with their own SDI program, that if we don't respond we will be placed in a dangerously vulnerable position. Allegations of this kind are difficult to refute, at least without the kind of classified information that cannot be released to the public. To try to refute them anyway runs the risk of appearing either complacent about the Soviet threat or a dupe of their propaganda machine.

Lord Chalfont's and Keith Payne's books try to exploit all these opportunities in making their case for Star Wars. Chalfont is a noted British defense commentator and parliamentarian. Most of his slim volume consists of a rambling critique of Western deterrence and defense policy, rather than an assessment of SDI. His analysis is sloppy, unbalanced, and at times blatantly disingenuous. By contrast, Payne's book is far more subtle and skillful in making many of the same arguments. Indeed, it is probably the best defense of Star Wars written to date. While Chalfont's pronouncements are often shrill, Payne comes across as more reasonable. The unsuspecting reader may find him wholly convincing.

Strategic Defenses, on the other hand, is markedly different in style, tone, and substance. Strictly speaking, it is not a book at all. It is, rather, a compendium of two reports written by the congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), which Princeton University Press has usefully bound together in book form. One report assesses the feasibility and implications of ballistic missile defenses. The other examines the issue of anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons. Unfortunately, many will be deterred from reading two such lengthy, and at times quite technical, studies. Still, studies like this are unavoidable if we are to do justice to such a complex and important topic. Both reports, at least, come with summaries. Together they provide the most balanced, if also the most turgid, assessment of SDI available to the general public. The OTA reports bend over backward to be fair to both sides of the debate, but their message is clear. Not only are they skeptical of the technical feasibility of a comprehensive ballistic missile defense shield that would protect the American population, but they also plead for caution in proceeding with lesser, more attainable objectives.

CHALFONT and Payne start from the same premise: that the present American policy of deterrence, of threatening nuclear retaliation for Soviet aggression, is fundamentally hollow. It would be irrational and irresponsible, they argue, to risk the extinction of American society—if not of mankind—by following through on the threat. Moreover, as both point out with hypothetical scenarios, the Soviets could exploit these fears by first attacking American retaliatory forces (or, as in Payne's case, oil refineries) and then threatening further attacks on American cities if the United States either counterattacked or failed to comply with Soviet demands. With a ballistic missile defense system, on the other hand, the United States would not be vulnerable to such coercion, in their account. Nor would it be

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prone to nuclear blackmail from Third World nations, or even from terrorist groups that one day might get hold of the means to attack the American mainland.

These arguments have been around for some time. They were the basis for much of the mid-1970s concern about a "window of vulnerability," which was thought to be open as a consequence of the Soviet Union's growing ability to destroy a large proportion of the American land-based retaliatory force. (Ironically, the recommended antidote then was not ballistic missile defense but more offensive options, which were supposed to preserve the credibility of the American deterrent.) And most of the counterarguments to the window of vulnerability thesis are just as valid now as they were in the 1970s.

Obviously the uncertainty that Soviet attack planners could restrict American fatalities from a limited nuclear strike to levels that would not provoke the United States to retaliate will remain. Still, America's options are not limited to capitulation or blowing up the world. In fact the United States can reverse the situation, and present precisely the same dilemma to the Soviets, with a limited counterattack designed to keep Soviet fatalities low while still holding their cities hostage to further attacks. True, as Chalfont points out, discussions of limited nuclear strikes can become "a strange excursion into fantasy"; but surely they are no more fantastic than similar discussions of damage limitation through ballistic missile defense. Furthermore, neither Payne nor Chalfont acknowledge that the Soviets will presumably respond to SDI with their own defensive system, and that these systems will reduce American retaliatory options, particularly when it comes to responding to Soviet aggression in other parts of the world.

It is interesting to note that Payne's later discussion of Soviet nuclear targeting doctrine seems at odds with his own nuclear coercion scenario. He writes that "in the Soviet view, nuclear weapons should concentrate on military objectives, such as destroying enemy nuclear forces. The gratuitous destruction of population centers does not appear to play a role in Soviet military doctrine." Moreover, he believes (rather astonishingly) that the Soviets would continue to observe a "no-cities" targeting doctrine even after the United States had taken measures actively to defend its nuclear deterrent.

In addition to their simplification of the American predicament, their reduction of it to a choice between suicide or surrender, both Chalfont and Payne lead us to believe that SDI will deliver us from the nuclear dilemma by offering the realistic prospect of survival from attack. The naysayers are dismissed as Luddites; they are lumped into the company of previous technological pessimists who believed that atomic power or spaceflight was also impossible. But splitting the atom, or landing a man on the moon, is an utterly spurious analogy to the technical challenges that confront SDI. As the OTA study points out, "any effective BMD [ballistic missile defense] system . . . must operate and endure against a reactive adversary intent on defeating it. . . . The moon and the nucleus did not hide, run away, or shoot back."

THIS FUNDAMENTAL difference is either ignored or glossed over by Payne and Chalfont. Indeed, their discussion of technical feasibility is very limited, and dangerously misleading. For example, both play the now familiar arithmetical game of illustrating how a multilayered defense system, with key elements deployed in space, could provide near perfect protection of the United States. Payne argues that a five-layered system, each layer operating with 85 percent effectiveness, would allow only 0.01 percent of the warheads to reach the target. What he neglects to point out (besides the fact that there is no way a system like this can be realistically tested to justify such high levels of confidence) is that the performances of individual defense layers are likely to be highly interdependent. A significant drop in performance from the first layer of the defense system—which is, incidentally, the most vulnerable—could place an overwhelming burden on subsequent layers. And as we are dealing with nuclear weapons, there can be little tolerance for shortcomings in performance. As the OTA study chillingly concludes, "The difference between a 90 percent effective city defense and a 99.9 percent effective city defense is a hundredfold increase in the number of weapons reaching U.S. cities; this could make the difference between the survival and the destruction of our civilization."

That SDI may never provide an astrodome-type defense of the United States does not seem to detract from either Payne's or Chalfont's enthusiasm for the program. Indeed, a glaring contradiction emerges as both books eventually argue that less-than-perfect defenses are desirable in their own right, simply to complicate the calculations of Soviet war planners. Thus, after all the sanctimonious lambasting of mutual assured destruction, both end up advocating that the American offensive nuclear retaliatory capability be protected through ballistic missile defense. As

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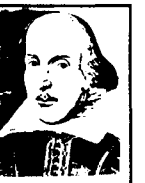

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Chalfont baldly states: "It must, however, be emphasized that SDI does not imply the complete abandonment of a second-strike retaliatory nuclear capacity. It *does* [his emphasis] imply the ability to maintain it at a much lower level of nuclear weapons." The reader may be forgiven for asking whether SDI is for the protection of people or missiles.

Since President Reagan first made his Star Wars speech, the "deterrent-enhancement" rationale has become the acceptable face of SDI. Regardless of its ironic contradiction of Reagan's own stated goals, many have signed on to this objective to avoid appearing either too negative toward SDI or too "soft" on defense in general. Few have questioned whether the American nuclear deterrent is really in straits so dire as to warrant such vast expenditures, or whether there are alternative ways—less costly and less destabilizing alternatives—of making it more able to survive a Soviet attack.

As numerous studies have demonstrated, the United States would still retain massive retaliatory power even after suffering a devastating first strike that decimated its land-based forces. Even the belief that the surviving forces will not be able to conduct a prompt counter-strike against the remaining Soviet "hard targets" (such as military installations) does not stand up to analysis. The American deployment of the virtually invulnerable Trident II submarine-launched missile will accomplish the same thing; so, too, will surviving bombers, though a few hours later. Moreover, even as we are investigating SDI in an effort to complicate Soviet attack, we are also procuring the mobile, land-based Midgetman missile for precisely that purpose. As Leon Wieseltier has observed, the Reagan administration, having closed the window of vulnerability with the Scowcroft Report on Strategic Forces, is now deliberately reopening it to justify SDI.

Regardless of the prospect of a totally disarming Soviet first strike, there is indeed always the Soviet ballistic missile defense program to worry about. Chalfont and Payne devote individual chapters to discussions of the relentless buildup of Soviet strategic defenses after the United States had virtually abandoned such activity in the 1970s. Both indicate that the Soviets are poised for a "breakout" from the ABM Treaty, which essentially prohibits territorial defenses. Each catalogs the various types of strategic defense systems—radars, satellites, surface-to-air missiles, ABM interceptors, and so on—to illustrate the massive disparities in American and Soviet capabilities. But their call of alarm is utterly misleading. It ignores qualitative factors, such as the relative performance of American and Soviet radars and satellites; geopolitical factors, such as the contiguity of the Soviet Union to Western Europe and China, which places higher demands on air defense preparedness; and military factors, such as the greater emphasis that the United States has placed on manned penetrating bombers.

IT IS CERTAINLY true that the Soviets maintain an active research and development effort. It has led to the modernization of the small force of ABM interceptors deployed around Moscow. But it is silly—no, false and irresponsible—to argue, as Payne does, that "Soviet defenses are already placing some targets beyond the reach of U.S. retaliatory forces." That will certainly be news to the boys at SAC. As for Soviet "breakout" potential, it is probably true that the Soviets are in a better position than the United States to deploy a territorial defense system, but it is hardly likely to be any better than the system that the United States contemplated deploying in the 1970s and abandoned because it could be overwhelmed too easily. Moreover, the most logical way to hedge against this possibility may not be with a ballistic missile defense effort of one's own, but with advanced research on strategic "penetration aids," which will confound and frustrate Soviet defenses. (The term "breakout," by the way, is a classic example of the semantics of threat inflation. Does it mean that we would wake up one morning to find that our retaliatory forces could no longer penetrate Soviet airspace and that the Soviets could strike us with impunity? Of course it doesn't; but that is what the threat inflators would have us believe.)

Both Payne and Chalfont repeatedly reassure the reader that SDI is only a research program. This has an appealing ring to it, but again it is misleading. As the OTA study notes, "The SDI cannot be adequately characterized as 'just a research program to find out what is possible.'" Not only is it a major military research and development effort with offensive as well as defensive applications, but, as the Soviet reaction has demonstrated, there is always the chance

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that actual deployments will take place. As a result, SDI has become the single most important bone of contention in the current arms control discussions. Reykjavik showed that what will make the Soviets amenable to deep reductions is not SDI, but the surrender of SDI. All that SDI will probably persuade the Soviets to do is: build up. It is one thing to talk about a mutually negotiated transition to a defense dominant relationship; it is quite another to achieve it, even if it does seem to promise a more stable world, which is doubtful anyway. As Christoph Bertram has remarked, SDI is yet another instance of the common human failing of trying to shape the future before we've mastered the present.

PAUL B. STARES

Paul B. Stares is a research associate at the Brookings Institution and author of *The Militarization of Space: U.S. Space Policy, 1945-1984* (Cornell University Press) and the forthcoming *Space and National Security* (Brookings).

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

diet that would cause kidney problems.

Most bodybuilders aren't "muscleheads." We don't believe everything we read, whether we read it in Weider publications or TNR.

RICHARD A. GOODMAN
Oakland, California

TERRORISM AND SARTRE

To the editors:

There was a time when a thoughtful person might have written to say that your editorial on "Nihilism and Terrorism" (September 29) was unworthy of the traditions of THE NEW REPUBLIC. Unfortunately, that editorial's most salient characteristics—of pseudo-intellectual diatribe and the reiteration of reactionary commonplaces—are the characteristics that you have lately chosen to make your own.

You rehearse the detail of the beastly murder of Jews in Istanbul, and then say that "this is the existential terrorism of which Sartre was fond." One may hold a reserved position on Jean-Paul Sartre while recalling that he defended Jewish causes and the state of Israel to the end of his life. To imply that he would have approved of the murder of worshipers in a synagogue is to be both a demagogue and an ignoramus. To say that his attitude would have been "fond" is appalling.

This same editorial describes my article in *Harper's* on terrorism as the work of a "useful idiot" on the cover and as that of a "moral idiot" in the text. I would sooner be blamed than praised in an unsigned effusion containing the sort of slander I mention above. So it gives me no satisfaction to note that the word employed in both the title and the body of your article, to describe motiveless and random slaying, is "nihilism." This is the precise word that I propose, in *Harper's*, as one alternative to the promiscuously overworked usage of "terrorism." There is, in this case, no compliment to be found in your unthinking plagiarism.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS
Washington, D.C.

The editors reply:

Hitchens's nostalgia for the old TNR is touching. His ignorance of Sartre is breathtaking. Sartre's preface to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* is a classic text of existential terrorism. He expresses in it not just a fondness but an admiration for revolutionary murder: "This irrepressible violence is neither sound and fury, nor the resurrection of savage instincts, nor even the effect of resentment: it is man recreating himself. . . . To shoot down a European"—any European will do—"is to kill two birds with one stone, to destroy an oppressor and the man he oppresses at the same time: there remain a dead man, and a free man. . . ."

Of course Sartre was no anti-Semite. But philosophers who glorify existential terror—murder, which, in and of itself, is liberating—and journalists who merely apologize for it are not exonerated when they protest, "I did not mean for these innocents to be killed, but those."

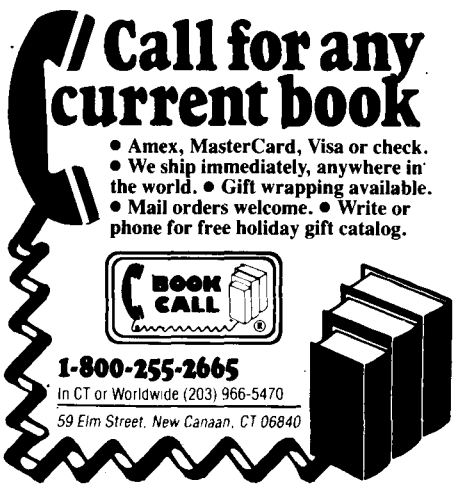
TRB, *from page 4*

With one thing and another, then, Reagan's proposal would not make nuclear weapons disappear. That leaves Gorbachev with a problem. Against a drastically reduced nuclear arsenal, Star Wars might actually work. The Soviets would be unable to overcome it by flooding the skies with missiles. The suggestion that we would actually present such a masterwork of Western technology—the result of a gargantuan research investment—to the Soviets on a platter is one they are also right to snort at.

So Reagan's "dream" is a world where the Soviets remain vulnerable to our nuclear arsenal, but we might be invulnerable to theirs. Nuclear superiority, in other words. A wonderful dream, but not one the Soviets can be expected to share. And as the Soviets point out, laser beams from the sky can be used as offensive weapons, too. Can they prudently slash their nuclear arsenals if we're cooking up things like that?

Optimists see room for compromise between Reagan's position that SDI research should proceed full-speed and Gorbachev's position that research should be limited to laboratories. Gorbachev didn't demand a total research ban. Reagan was willing to forgo actual deployment for ten years. But it seems unlikely that anyone will find a formula that makes it possible to escape for long the basic conflict between arms control and strategic defense. The conflict is that no party is going to agree to serious offensive weapon reductions—however mutual, however balanced—as long as the other side has a unilateral advantage in defense. And despite the Reagan administration's insistence that the Soviets are developing their own SDI, the behavior of both sides makes clear that both sides think America has the advantage in this expensive, high-tech endeavor.

So Reagan cannot have his dream of drastic disarmament and his dream of the "Peace Shield" as well. Which dream should we pursue? A technology that might or might not protect us against some percentage of enemy missiles a decade or three down the road, or an agreement that will certainly reduce the number of those missiles immediately? It doesn't seem like a very hard choice.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CAMBRIDGE DIARIST

Changing Minds

ADAM MICHNIK, one of two Solidarity activists to be honored with this year's Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award, has announced that he will use his prize money to pay for a translation into Polish of Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Fifty years ago, TNR published a series of essays called "Books That Changed Our Minds" that included Freud's *New Introductory Lectures*, Lenin's *State and Revolution*, Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class*, and so on. We would be hard-pressed to come up with a similar list of books that have appeared since the first one. Arendt's *Origins* is one obvious nominee, although not exactly by acclamation. TNR gave it a slight and slighting review when it was published in 1951. And when I first heard of *Origins*, as a college student in 1956, it was from the sneering lips of Herbert Marcuse, who couldn't stand the thought that Nazism and Communism were of one mode. Soon afterward the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* prophesied that its next edition would not list totalitarianism at all. The word, it said, was just an "anti-Communist slogan." We should be so lucky as to have no need of the concept. Yet the Arendt analysis continues to generate derision. The detractors attack its big truth by pointing joyfully to the small exceptions, as if the totalitarian essence of, say, Bulgaria, is diminished by a particular conflict between the Party and the army. Arendt never said that any government meets every specification of the ideal type. *Origins* also has been caught in the crossfire between Jeane Kirkpatrick and her critics about the relative transience (and malleability) of authoritarian governments versus the permanence (or at least greater resilience) of totalitarian ones. The vitality of the church and the survival of the trade union impulse in Poland are often mustered as evidence by Arendt's deriders. But Adam Michnik, Poland's most noble and intellectually scrupulous voice, understands the central relevance of her classic work to the postwar experience of Central and Eastern Europe. And that is conclusive understanding for me.

PRESIDENT REAGAN compares private American support for the Nicaraguan rebels to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade of Americans who fought on the "loyalist" or Republican side of the Spanish Civil War. An odd analogy, since a few months ago, Reagan suggested that the Lincoln Brigade had been on the wrong side. Loyalist Spain is the last remaining international illusion of the old progressive sensibility. It has been immune to both the devastating witness of painful memoirs and the accumulated evidence of disinterested scholarship, both establishing that it was not just contaminated but dominated by Stalinism. If George Orwell didn't change the mind of the age on Spain, Ronald Reagan won't. Neither will Ronald Radosh. A frequent contributor to TNR, Radosh is the author of "Spain and the Intellectuals" in the October issue of the *New Criterion*. Radosh's distillation of disparate sources reveals the subversion and exploitation of Republican Spain by the commissars. Political and military discipline, brutally administered, was the province of the Soviet security police. Their atrocities were as enormous as Franco's. Their lies were greater, because they—unlike the fascists—had to disguise their aims. They too betrayed Spanish democracy along with betraying the thousands of young people who came to fight and die for it. Radosh's uncle was one of those young Americans. A few months ago in the *Washington Post*, Radosh asked whether his uncle had died in an unworthy cause. His complicated answer did not please the guardians of the left's remaining illusions, and they went after him in the usual places where orthodoxies are desperately preserved. To his essay in the *New Criterion* there will be no rebuttals other than curses.

ON A RECENT VISIT to Boston, Bishop Tutu was asked whether he favored freedom for Mandela. What a strange question, he must have thought. Of course he did. It is the first demand of South African blacks. Apparently several hours later Tutu was told the meaning of the strange question. The Mandela at issue was not Nelson Mandela, but a 12-square-mile chunk of Boston that some black activists imagine as a freestanding city. The question is on the ballot next month as a non-binding referendum. The secessionist fantasy has sporadically held allure for some blacks, usually intellectual cranks. But now it's actually been taken up by some major black politicians. There has been much skepticism from other blacks about what kind of tax base the depressed neighborhoods of Dorchester, Mattapan, and Roxbury would provide, and whether a community so shattered by social pathologies is ready to go it alone. But these queries are dismissed as Tomish. There's probably too much common sense in black Boston for secession to win too many black votes. But there are a good many whites who would be quite happy to partition off the three neighborhoods and let Mandela float out to sea. So a combination of black fantasists, racist whites, and white liberals whose politics is usually defined by the latest version of the militant black agenda may (with the yawning indifference this idea has evoked from the rest of the electorate) just make Mandela a viable political proposition. This will be another in the series of Pyrrhic victories for black America, momentarily lifting its morale but leaving its fundamental problems unsolved and unaddressed.

THERE ARE AT LEAST three other referendum questions on the Massachusetts ballot. One would end tax funding for abortions; the second would permit aid to private and religious schools; the third would put a cap on tax increases. I think I'm against all of them, but I'm even more against the idea that these issues should be decided by plebiscite. The Founding Fathers had a healthy allergy to plebiscitarian democracy. But the allergy seems not to be shared by any of the contemporary political factions that purport to be their heirs—least of all the conservatives who put these three questions on the Massachusetts ballot. But liberal church folk, now mobilized against these ballot items, also resort to referendum and plebiscite. This is how various locales have become "nuclear-free zones" or "sanctuaries" for illegal immigrants or how they have formulated their own foreign policy toward South Africa. The genius of American politics, such as it is, is the genius of representative government. The single-issue passions provoked by referendums undermine representative government and civility in society as a whole.

M.P.

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